

Anti-terrorist investigators concentrate on five groups in world-wide search

Bomb checks 'fooled by two trigger device'

● Experts believe that the bomb in the Pan Am jumbo was set off by a sophisticated double-detonator device that fooled airport baggage checks

● Investigators began questioning baggage handlers at Heathrow and Frankfurt to establish how suitcases and packages were stowed

● British and American counter-terrorist officers are investigating five groups of terrorists, concentrating on radical Palestinian groups

● The name of Abu Nidal has been mentioned, but a US official said that it would be a "departure from his normal practice" to use a bomb on an aircraft

By Harvey Elliott, Michael Evans and Tony Dawe

A sophisticated device with two separate detonating systems is now believed to have triggered the bomb which brought down the Pan Am Boeing 747 over Lockerbie with the loss of 270 lives.

As a huge international inquiry was launched into the outrage, crash investigators were working on the theory that the first element of the device was a barometric unit set off by altitude. This then activated the second element, an electronic timer. The double detonator technique was devised by terrorists after airports including Frankfurt, where the Pan Am

flight originated, installed pressure chambers especially to trigger bombs primed with a barometric detonator.

They assumed that no airline could afford to leave its baggage in a pressure chamber for up to eight hours or more and developed the new device which relied on both digital timer and barometric pressure.

The investigators and security chiefs yesterday began questioning dozens of baggage

World-wide hunt... 2
German doubts... 2
Warning dispute... 2
The suspects... 12
Leading article... 13
Letters... 13

handlers at both Heathrow and Frankfurt airports, to establish where hundreds of suitcases and packages were stowed in their search for the bag which exploded in the front cargo hold.

The West German authorities insisted that there was no evidence to suggest the bomb was loaded in Frankfurt but their confidence may be based on the fact that some of the plane's luggage passed through the pressure chamber.

It would have triggered a normal barometric device but not the sophisticated one now identified. The Scottish detective leading the hunt has already sent officers to West Germany and may send more to the Middle East, the likely home of the terrorists who planted the bomb.

Other investigators are concentrating on the transit area of Heathrow in the belief that the bomb was placed into a suitcase at Frankfurt and was then transferred from the Boeing 727 which operated that flight to the doomed jumbo jet either in an open trolley or a metal container and loaded straight onto a pallet in the front of the aircraft.

The baggage holds of both the 727 from Frankfurt and the 747 from Heathrow are both pressurised in the same way as the passenger cabin. As the aircraft climb the pressure is gradually reduced until - in

the case of the jumbo jet - it settles at the equivalent of around 8,000ft when the aircraft is at its maximum cruising height over the Atlantic. As the aircraft crossed 31,000ft on its climb over Scotland the pressure in both the passenger cabin and the baggage hold would have been around 5,500ft.

The 727, on its one hour flight from Frankfurt would have been flying at between 28,000 and 31,000 feet and the pressure in its cabin would have been rather lower - the equivalent of perhaps 6,500ft. The first barometric trigger could have been sprung during this first leg, so setting off the timer which the terrorists may have set in such a way that it would have exploded over the sea as the jumbo left the Scottish mainland. But the aircraft was 25 minutes late taking off from Heathrow, so instead of crashing into the sea it landed on Lockerbie.

In the past, one Palestinian terrorist group, the PFLP-GC, led by Ahmad Jibril, was noted for using barometric devices against aircraft. Members of his group were arrested two months ago in West Germany and a pressure detonator was among items found in their bomb factory.

American and British counter-terrorist officers are investigating five probable groups according to sources in Washington yesterday.

US officials concerned with the Pan Am disaster said the most active intelligence inquiries were focusing on radical Palestinian groups.

But four other suspected perpetrators of the bomb outrage were Libya or Syria recognized to be states that have sponsored terrorism: Iranian-influenced terrorist groups; European terrorist organizations; and lastly non-terrorist criminals attempting to kill certain people known to be on the plane.

The officials admitted that if a Palestinian group was involved, the list of suspects could be reduced to "just a handful".

Continued on page 20, col 5

Bush will 'firmly punish' saboteurs

By Christopher Thomas and Andrew McEwen

As American anger mounted over the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, President-elect George Bush pledged yesterday to punish "firmly and decisively" those responsible for the "cowardly" sabotage.

He declined to say what action the US might take if conclusive evidence was established about who was responsible. His pledge echoed the threat by President Reagan when he entered the White House in 1981 to carry out swift and effective retribution for terrorist attacks against Americans.

Speaking at a brief press conference before returning to Washington from Beville, Texas, where he has been on

holiday, Mr Bush said the US was doing everything in its power to prevent terrorist attacks.

But "when you're dealing with something as cowardly as that, it is almost impossible to guarantee that there will never be another terrorist act. We are not helpless. But it's a very difficult threat. It's a whole new menace to try to effect political change by cowardly terrorist action."

American officials emphasized, however, that there was still no evidence that a terrorist group was responsible. Mr William Webster, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said yesterday

Continued on page 20, col 4



A section of the fuselage, blown apart from the Pan Am jet by the explosion over the Scottish border, being removed from a field near Lockerbie yesterday.

NatWest and Woolwich increase mortgage rates

By Vivien Goldsmith, Family Money Editor

The main round of mortgage increases is under way with Britain's largest bank and a leading building society announcing new rates from January 1.

National Westminster Bank is raising its rate by one percentage point to 13.75 per cent.

The Woolwich, the fourth largest building society with nearly 500,000 borrowers, is raising its rate by 0.75 percentage points to 13.5 per cent for repayment mortgages and 13 per cent for endowment mortgages of £60,000 and above.

The annual percentage rates for a standard repayment mortgage from the two lenders are identical - 14.8 per cent. This is because the building societies do not recalculate the amount outstanding until the end of the year, while the banks continually adjust the level of the debt and calculate the interest accordingly.

Borrowers with a £50,000 repayment mortgage with the NatWest have seen their monthly repayments rise from £342.54 in May, when the rate was 9.5 per cent, to £393.12 when the rate climbed to 11.5 per cent in August, and then to

£479.39 in October when the rate went to 12.75 per cent.

They now face the prospect of repayments of £510.80 a month from January 1 at the new rate of 13.75 per cent. This is a rise of just a shade under 50 per cent from the low point of the year in May, June and July.

The rise in mortgage rates has been long awaited - ever

Estate agents hit... 23

since the bank rate climbed from 12 per cent to 13 per cent at the end of November after a record trade deficit.

Lenders were reluctant to deliver the blow to homeowners in the run-up to Christmas, and awaited the December trade figures with the fear that another bad set would trigger a further hike in bank base rates.

But the December figures

Monthly Repayments on 25 Year Mortgage

	9.5% (May 1988)	11.5% (Aug 1988)	12.75% (Oct 1988)	13.75% (Jan 1989)
£30,000	205.52	235.57	255.76	272.11
£50,000	342.54	393.12	479.39	510.80
£80,000	547.02	748.77	814.84	868.84

Source: NatWest Bank

Merchant bank is replaced

By Our City Staff

County NatWest, the merchant bank subsidiary of National Westminster Bank, has agreed to give up its role as financial adviser to Blue Arrow, the employment group.

A short statement said that both companies felt the bank should stand down. Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank, has been appointed as a replacement.

Mr Tony Berry, the chairman of Blue Arrow, has been anxious to distance himself from County NatWest since the Department of Trade and Industry began to investigate the bank's role in Blue Arrow's takeover of Manpower in the US.

A spokesman for County NatWest said its 9.5 per cent shareholding in Blue Arrow would remain as an investment.

Details, page 21

Mayhew hints at Ryan Irish trial

By Peter Malligan

Sir Patrick Mayhew, QC, the Attorney General, signalled for the first time yesterday his willingness to have Father Patrick Ryan, the suspected terrorist, brought to trial in an Irish courtroom.

Although Downing Street sources indicated last night that a final decision has not been made, Sir Patrick is quoted in a newspaper interview as saying that a trial there would be "better than nothing".

In the interview with the Irish Press, he said the Government would be pleased if Father Ryan were brought to trial in the Republic and would be glad "in the present circumstances" to use the Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act by which to do this.

His comments follow a bitter public dispute between London and Dublin, and the Irish Government's refusal to

extradite Father Ryan on the grounds that publicity surrounding the case made a fair trial in Britain impossible.

Father Ryan, aged 58, is wanted by Scotland Yard on charges of conspiracy to murder and cause explosions, and of possessing explosives. There has been speculation that London would make a request for a trial in the Republic in the new year.

To that end, use of the rarely used Criminal Law Jurisdiction Act, drafted 12 years ago to overcome loopholes in Irish extradition laws, was left open by Mr John Murray, the Irish Attorney General, when he refused extradition.

Downing Street re-emphasized yesterday that the security of witnesses had to be a major concern, "which is why consideration is taking time. There is no decision."

Sinister problem of the wasted talents at work

By Roland Rudd
Employment Affairs Reporter

Companies are wasting the special talents of up to 10 per cent of their employees by failing to cater for those who are left-handed, according to a report published yesterday in *Personnel Management*.

Left-handed people, it says, tend to be more creative, imaginative and inventive, but their non-conformist attitudes are often mistaken for "day-dreaming" or laziness and they are made to feel at a disadvantage.

Mr Tony Milne, director of counselling at the Centre for Professional Employment Counselling, says that apart from writing difficulties, left-handers, who account for 10 per cent of the population, live with a biased

vocabulary. "Adroit" and "dextrous" are associated with the right hand, but "sinister" and "gauche" with the left; the righteous sit on the right hand of God and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines left-handed as "awkward, clumsy, ambiguous, double-edged, of doubtful sincerity".

Right-handers use more of the left half of the brain, responsible for words and logic, while left-handers use more of the right, which governs visualizing and feelings.

Left-handers are better at working with people and producing new ideas but are not as good as right-handers in drawing quick conclusions.

Some employers discriminate against left-handed employees through insensitivity in the design and layout of

equipment which is difficult for them. As a result, left-handed people face greater stress.

More than 60 per cent of Mr Milne's clients, who are referred by employers worried about the performance of their staff, are left-handed.

"I often discover that they present a rather generalized, vague, not well-visualized picture of discontent with work, career and life generally. There is also a keen awareness of the disadvantages they suffer."

Personnel managers are urged to identify how many employees are left-handed, explain how their natural qualities differ and then consider "whether the person's job can be enriched to provide more satisfaction and better performance."

TOMORROW

Who's what



● The Times publishes a comprehensive two-page guide to the New Year's Honours List.
● Who are the world's best party givers? On New Year's Eve, in colour, *The Times* draws up a star-studded guest list.

TODAY

First Light
● All this week *The Times* is serializing Peter Ackroyd's latest novel. The fifth extract appears today on page 16.

WIN £84,000

Portfolio

● There were no winners of yesterday's Portfolio Accumulator, so the Accumulator fund rises to £84,000. There is another £4,000 daily prize to be won today. Prices: page 25.

Shares rise

The FT-SE 100 share index closed above 1,800 although Bank of England figures indicate that the sharp rise in interest rates has yet slow down spending. Page 21

INDEX

Home News	2-3,5
Overseas	6-8
Business	21-25
Sport	28-32
Arts	15
Births, marriages, deaths	15
Cherishes	18
Chess	2
City Diary	23
Court & social	14
Crosswords	18,20
Day	12
Entertainments	19
Features	9,12,17
Fiction	16
Information	18
Law Report	26
Leading articles	13
Letters	13
Noting	27
Obituary	14
On This Day	10,11
Review of the year	10,11
Science Report	15
TV & Radio	19
Weather	20

ZWIRN SALE



THE SALE THAT LEAVES THE CROWD BEHIND.

If you're looking for the finest furs money can buy, there's only one place worth looking. And that's Zwirn in London, of course. A sale at Zwirn represents a rare opportunity to enjoy extraordinary quality and style in Zwirn furs, at an extraordinarily reduced price. (Some garments in the sale are actually under half price.) Fully stranded female mink coats at only £2,500 is just one example of the many bargains available. Including Blackglama Mink, Russian Sable, Alaskan Lynx. So if you're looking for the best, for less, look no further.

SALE STARTS TOMORROW

Preview Today Open 9.30 to 5.30 Mon-Sat
Open Monday January 2nd

ZWIRN PROBABLY THE BEST FURS IN THE WORLD. CERTAINLY THE BEST PRICES.

120 WIGMORE STREET LONDON W1 TELEPHONE 01-486 4671

World-wide hunt for a bomber's deadly secret

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Reporter

Four options face investigators searching for the method used to hide the plastic explosive on PA 103 that killed 259 people.

Was the bomb hidden in by a martyr or a dupe, slipped on board as extra baggage, hidden in freight, or placed on the 747 sometime in a journey that started at San Francisco the previous day?

Much of the work by the Scottish police, Scotland Yard, the FBI and the BKA German federal investigators will concentrate on the first option, scouring the list of passengers who boarded the linking journey in Frankfurt or the main flight in London.

In the past five years at least

nine other attacks on aircraft have killed 572 people in flights.

About sixty passengers transferred from the Frankfurt flight to make the transatlantic journey. Police in London and Frankfurt are investigating whether a passenger booked to make the connection failed to catch the aircraft and his luggage continued without him. One American man failed to make the flight.

Police now know there were "interline" passengers who joined the Pan Am flight from other airlines. Once a passenger has begun his journey the security checks are likely to diminish.

It is possible that a bomber could have started his journey by catching a flight from an airport, perhaps

in the Middle East for example, with bad security and escaped any effective checks. Drug smugglers regularly use that method.

If the bomb was in passenger luggage, was the bomber a martyr or a dupe?

Middle Eastern groups have regularly used suicide bombers in Beirut and their exploits are often caught on video.

There is little chance that the bomber might have been a passenger who had recently taken out very heavy insurance and intended to kill himself. The fact that some form of plastic explosive was used is likely to rule out that theory.

The use of a dupe has been attempted by Middle Eastern groups and several attacks have

been mounted on El Al flights including the mission by Nezar Hindawi in 1986 using Ann Murphy, his pregnant girlfriend.

A "friend" might ask a passenger to carry some luggage or a present from him or her to be given to someone in New York.

The second option for the investigators must be either the freight carried by the 747 or the possibility that extra luggage was slipped on to the aircraft.

Customs experts point out that luggage is stolen in transit at Heathrow. If someone can take away luggage or simply take one bag off and replace it with another? There are constant worries about outside security and the level of

checks on workers and vehicles going on to the tarmac.

The cargo hold of the aircraft included large freight items and smaller pieces including parcels. Long timers are commonplace in the terrorist world and it is possible to set a bomb to run, and then deliver it for a transatlantic flight.

The fourth option might also involve a long-delay device. A bomb could have been put on board the aircraft at one of the stops it made on its last journey. After arrival at Heathrow the aircraft stayed on the tarmac for three to four hours before taking off for the last time.

Although a terrorist bomb is the central theme of the international operation, accident investigators

and security chiefs have not ruled out other possible reasons for the blast.

Some remain puzzled that no identifiable group has claimed responsibility and are questioning whether the explosive might have been taken on board by an American serviceman as a souvenir.

Only last week an artillery shell exploded in the cargo hold of an Avio flight to Madrid and investigations proved that it had been carried on board by a Spanish soldier. A search of other servicemen uncovered another shell.

It is also possible that the explosion could have been deliberately triggered by a deranged passenger. Both theories are low on the list of options.

Dispute over warning grows

By Tony Dawe and Andrew McEwen

Politicians and lawyers joined the dispute yesterday about the way the British and American Governments handled warnings of a terrorist attack on Pan Am flights.

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, sidestepped questions: US officials said it would have been irresponsible to alarm the public because the warnings appeared ill-founded.

Both were made to US embassies early this month, the first in Helsinki on December 5 by an Arab who said Abu Nidal sympathizers would put a bomb on a Pan Am flight in Frankfurt. A further warning was given by Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, to West German officials.

The US Government told all its embassies and US airlines were warned by the Federal Aviation Administration. But the warnings were not sent out to the airlines' overseas bases.

In London the Department of Transport was informed and it told airline security managers. But BAA, which runs Britain's main airports, said it was not warned.

Sir Geoffrey Howe was asked on the BBC Radio 4 programme "The World at One" if he was satisfied that warnings were properly handled. He replied: "That is another matter that needs to be investigated. It is not for me to make any pronouncement about that now."

His reply amounted to sidestepping an embarrassing question. The Foreign Office has stressed that the Department of Transport, not itself, has responsibility.

The issue has already been raised by the Opposition and is certain to lead to a continuing dispute when Parliament resumes in the new year.

In the United States it has attracted more interest from lawyers rather than politicians. Those representing families of victims of the disaster say they will sue both the US government and Pan Am for failing to warn passengers of the threat.

They say the fact that the government warned certain State Department employees but not Pan Am passengers could make it liable for millions of dollars in damages.

A State Department spokeswoman claimed, however, that the Helsinki call was a coincidence and had no connection with the crash.

"I don't think we have to prove whether the threat had anything to do with the crash," said Mr Stuart Speiser, a New York lawyer representing at least six of the victims' families.

Germans doubt device planted at Frankfurt

From John England, Bonn

There have been no indications that the bomb was flown to London aboard Pan American's Boeing 727 feeder flight from Frankfurt, Herr Michael Butz, spokesman for the Interior Ministry, said in Bonn yesterday.

But experts from the West German security authorities would meet today to discuss the crash, he said. If it appeared that some security measures at German airports needed to be tightened, the government would act immediately.

Herr Butz said West German airports were known worldwide for their high security standards, and especially tight controls were in effect for Pan American flights before the crash.

In Karlsruhe, Herr Alexander Prechtel, spokesman for the Federal Public Prosecution's office — which investigates acts of terrorism but is not at present pursuing inquiries into the Pan American crash — confirmed that a member of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC) had been arrested in Frankfurt on November 29.

But he denied a report that the man, whom he named as Martin Kadorah, aged 41, a Jordanian-born West German citizen, had been carrying a transistor radio containing plastic explosive and a barometric detonator — suitable for use against an airliner.

"Kadorah was due to be arrested on October 26 when BKA agents detained 14 PFLP-GC members in raids on homes and businesses in Frankfurt, Hamburg, West Berlin and Neuss, near Düsseldorf", Herr Prechtel

said. "But he was away on holiday in Spain and we had to wait until he came back."

A "very professional, highly sophisticated" transistor radio bomb, as described, however, had been found in a car at Neuss. Although the explosive weighed only 300g it would have been sufficient to bring down a plane.

Herr Prechtel, however, declined to link the group with the attack on the airliner. "They are certainly one of the groups which might be suspected of the bombing but we have no proof."

He added: "The raids on October 26 provided proof that the PFLP-GC was responsible for two attempted bomb attacks on American military trains running between Frankfurt and West Berlin in August, 1987 and April this year."

Caches left by the IRA and containing the explosive have been found hidden in mainland Britain and more than a hundred pounds was discovered in a south London flat last week.

Semtex was used by Nezar Hindawi in his attempt to use

scut's office — which investigates acts of terrorism but is not at present pursuing inquiries into the Pan American crash — confirmed that a member of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC) had been arrested in Frankfurt on November 29.

But he denied a report that the man, whom he named as Martin Kadorah, aged 41, a Jordanian-born West German citizen, had been carrying a transistor radio containing plastic explosive and a barometric detonator — suitable for use against an airliner.

"Kadorah was due to be arrested on October 26 when BKA agents detained 14 PFLP-GC members in raids on homes and businesses in Frankfurt, Hamburg, West Berlin and Neuss, near Düsseldorf", Herr Prechtel

said. "But he was away on holiday in Spain and we had to wait until he came back."

A "very professional, highly sophisticated" transistor radio bomb, as described, however, had been found in a car at Neuss. Although the explosive weighed only 300g it would have been sufficient to bring down a plane.

Herr Prechtel, however, declined to link the group with the attack on the airliner. "They are certainly one of the groups which might be suspected of the bombing but we have no proof."

He added: "The raids on October 26 provided proof that the PFLP-GC was responsible for two attempted bomb attacks on American military trains running between Frankfurt and West Berlin in August, 1987 and April this year."

Caches left by the IRA and containing the explosive have been found hidden in mainland Britain and more than a hundred pounds was discovered in a south London flat last week.

Semtex was used by Nezar Hindawi in his attempt to use

Women under security spotlight



A security guard examines Pan Am customers' baggage by X-ray machine at Heathrow airport yesterday.

By Mark Ellis

A security clampdown at London's Heathrow airport put women under close scrutiny at Pan Am's check-in desks yesterday.

Security chiefs fear a woman travelling alone may have been the unwitting victim chosen by terrorists to carry the bomb on board the Pan Am jumbo jet which crashed in Lockerbie.

In 1986 Nezar Hindawi, a Jordanian terrorist, attempted to blow up an El Al

jet at Heathrow by using his innocent Irish girlfriend as a bomb carrier.

Security men from Alert Management Systems, an American-owned security firm, were seen yesterday searching luggage to be loaded aboard Pan Am flight 103, Frankfurt to New York, due to leave Heathrow at 6pm last night.

Women travelling alone found their belongings carefully unpacked, radios and cassette players had their plastic covers and battery compartments opened and books were flicked through to check

for secret compartments.

Out of the dozens of passengers queuing for departure at Terminal 3 yesterday, several women took many minutes longer to pass through security control.

An American student returning to New York had three large suitcases opened and even her toothpaste container was checked.

She said: "I feel safer this is being done but I don't know why they are doing this to young women only."

Terrorists switch to Semtex

By Stewart Tendler

Semtex, the likely component of the Pan Am bomb, has become the favoured weapon of many terrorist groups in recent years ranging from the IRA in Northern Ireland to Middle Eastern groups waging war across the Mediterranean into Europe. Powerful,

maleable and odourless, it is ideal for terrorist attacks.

Produced in Eastern Europe as a military explosive it has been widely distributed to terrorist groups with the help of regimes such as the Libyan government.

Semtex was used by Nezar Hindawi in his attempt to use

scut's office — which investigates acts of terrorism but is not at present pursuing inquiries into the Pan American crash — confirmed that a member of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine — General Command (PFLP-GC) had been arrested in Frankfurt on November 29.

But he denied a report that the man, whom he named as Martin Kadorah, aged 41, a Jordanian-born West German citizen, had been carrying a transistor radio containing plastic explosive and a barometric detonator — suitable for use against an airliner.

"Kadorah was due to be arrested on October 26 when BKA agents detained 14 PFLP-GC members in raids on homes and businesses in Frankfurt, Hamburg, West Berlin and Neuss, near Düsseldorf", Herr Prechtel

said. "But he was away on holiday in Spain and we had to wait until he came back."

A "very professional, highly sophisticated" transistor radio bomb, as described, however, had been found in a car at Neuss. Although the explosive weighed only 300g it would have been sufficient to bring down a plane.

Herr Prechtel, however, declined to link the group with the attack on the airliner. "They are certainly one of the groups which might be suspected of the bombing but we have no proof."

He added: "The raids on October 26 provided proof that the PFLP-GC was responsible for two attempted bomb attacks on American military trains running between Frankfurt and West Berlin in August, 1987 and April this year."

Caches left by the IRA and containing the explosive have been found hidden in mainland Britain and more than a hundred pounds was discovered in a south London flat last week.

Semtex was used by Nezar Hindawi in his attempt to use

Six face theft charges

Five men and a woman appeared in court at Dumfries yesterday charged with the theft of papers and aircraft parts from the site of the Pan Am jet crash at Lockerbie.

All appeared in chambers separately before Sheriff Kenneth Barr and were later released on bail.

They were: Ratmorn Milenkovic, 47, of Loganbarn Road, Dumfries, charged with stealing aircraft parts; William Robert Patterson, 16, and Anne-Marie Patterson, 22, of Howmains Farm, Glencaple, near Dumfries; Gordon Houston, 21, of Dee Cottage, Bridge of Dee, near Castle Douglas, charged with stealing aircraft parts; Ronald Nigel Bowden, 18, of The Newk, Laurieston, charged with stealing parts; and Robert Grant Dick, 26, of Solway Street, Annan, charged with stealing papers and other items from the Sherwood Crescent area of Lockerbie.

A British Aerospace invention that could have found the explosives before they got into the Pan Am jet has been ignored by airlines, airports and the Government for four years.

As a result, the sophisticated system which can detect minute traces of most explosives — it still has difficulty with Semtex, the explosive now favoured by terrorists — in cargo or luggage containers has been a

commercial flop. The system uses X-rays and gas spectrometry, and by 1984, British Aerospace had developed a large static cargo surveillance version and a mobile version.

But government departments, BAA, formerly the British Airports Authority, and airlines all turned down the mobile version at £2.5 million. BAE, which has spent tens of millions on developing the system, was able only to interest Japan and the Middle East. Last night, Mr John

Police chief sets up murder inquiry

A senior Glasgow detective yesterday began setting up his operations in Lockerbie to head the investigation into the bomb attack on the Pan Am 747.

Det Chief Supt John Orr, one of the most experienced CID men in Scotland, will co-ordinate an international hunt for the murderers of 270 people.

Mr Orr, aged 43, who is

joint head of CID operations in Strathclyde, faces what one investigator yesterday forecast would be a very long search in which some clues, such as wreckage and bodies, may never be found.

Mr Orr has been drafted in by the Scottish authorities to the small neighbouring force of Dumfries and Galloway, where the airliner crashed. He holds a postgraduate diploma

in forensic science from Glasgow University, and is one of a group of senior Scottish officers who have trained with their English opposite numbers on handling large operations.

Scottish officers are already in London working with Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch.

Yard officers have been sent to the scene to liaise. The

London police are investigating the security surrounding the aircraft and making checks on passengers. A special incident room has been set up at Heathrow.

Checks on passengers are also being carried out by a special FBI team — in the United States the agency has responsibility for fighting terrorism — and federal police in West Germany.

Although one can never be certain what research would have led to, I am sure that with assistance from others in the aviation industry we would by

Bae invention 'could have detected explosive'

By Harvey Elliott
Air Correspondent

A British Aerospace invention that could have found the explosives before they got into the Pan Am jet has been ignored by airlines, airports and the Government for four years.

As a result, the sophisticated system which can detect minute traces of most explosives — it still has difficulty with Semtex, the explosive now favoured by terrorists — in cargo or luggage containers has been a

commercial flop. The system uses X-rays and gas spectrometry, and by 1984, British Aerospace had developed a large static cargo surveillance version and a mobile version.

But government departments, BAA, formerly the British Airports Authority, and airlines all turned down the mobile version at £2.5 million. BAE, which has spent tens of millions on developing the system, was able only to interest Japan and the Middle East. Last night, Mr John

Bourne, in charge of the project, said: "No one would agree to put money in to help us to develop the techniques. We proved that our machine is capable of spotting the tiniest amount of drugs or conventional explosive and we are close to finding ways of identifying plastic explosive such as Semtex."

Although one can never be certain what research would have led to, I am sure that with assistance from others in the aviation industry we would by

now have developed a foolproof method of spotting Semtex, too." The system, which is the most advanced in the world, "sniffs" the air surrounding baggage or cargo to identify substances carried. The results are then fed through a computer which displays them on a screen enabling the operator to read what is hidden.

Semtex has proved harder to detect, and Mr Bourne said: "We now feel that we must get this right before we offer it for sale again."

Although one can never be certain what research would have led to, I am sure that with assistance from others in the aviation industry we would by

now have developed a foolproof method of spotting Semtex, too." The system, which is the most advanced in the world, "sniffs" the air surrounding baggage or cargo to identify substances carried. The results are then fed through a computer which displays them on a screen enabling the operator to read what is hidden.

Semtex has proved harder to detect, and Mr Bourne said: "We now feel that we must get this right before we offer it for sale again."

NEWS ROUNDUP

Council grant to ANC challenged

Islington Council, north London, faces a legal challenge over financial assistance it has given to the African National Congress. A group of ratepayers is asking the district auditor to rule whether the Labour-controlled council exceeded its powers in giving £14,433 to the ANC.

Mr Pat McCann, a member of a ratepayers' group which has examined the council's 1986-87 accounts said: "There is no way the ratepayers should be expected to pay the expenses of the ANC. If Labour councillors want to fund this organization they should do it out of their own pockets."

Islington Council said the money had been given to the ANC, which has its British headquarters in Islington, to set up a counselling and advice service for South African refugees.

Terrorism charges

Armed police protected Lambeth Magistrates' Court in south London yesterday as a hospital worker was remanded until January 3 on terrorist charges. Eamon John Wadley, aged 35, of Wood Green, north London, is accused of conspiracy to cause explosions on or before 21 December. He is also accused of refusing to give information to assist in securing the arrest of another person for an offence under the 1984 Prevention of Terrorism Act involving the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism relating to Northern Irish affairs.

Double shooting

A man was yesterday thought to have shot dead his wife, badly injured her father and then killed himself, after his marriage broke up. Police found Mr Robert Lewis, aged 38, and his wife Dawn, aged 29, dead on Wednesday night after being called to the home of Mrs Lewis' parents in Westgate, Leominster, Hereford and Worcester. They also found Mr Derrick Davies, aged 34, her father, with a shotgun wound to his right leg. He is recovering in Hereford General Hospital after an emergency operation to amputate the leg.

Inquest adjourned

An inquest into the deaths of the mother and two children whose car was found in a Lancashire dock was opened and adjourned yesterday by the north Lancashire coroner. Mr John Smith, an accountant, said that he identified his wife and children, Mrs Elaine Smith, Christopher, aged seven, and Claire, aged three. They disappeared from the family home in Churchtown, near Garstang, Lancashire, on November 28 after he told his wife he intended to spend Christmas with another woman. Mrs Smith and her children will be buried tomorrow.

Gorbachov accolade

Mr Mikhail Gorbachov and Mrs Margaret Thatcher have been voted "man and woman of the year" in the annual poll of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme. The Soviet President was second last year while Mrs Thatcher had her third successive win. Mrs Edwina Currie, making a late surge after the salmonella controversy, was second among the women. Miss Benazir Bhutto third and the Princess Royal fourth. Second among the men was the Prince of Wales, with President Reagan third, Eddie Edwards, Britain's heroic ski-jumping failure, fourth, and Mr Yasser Arafat fifth.

More unleaded petrol

The number of filling stations selling unleaded petrol has increased sixfold in the past year, Mrs Virginia Bottomley, Under Secretary of State for the Environment, said yesterday. Outlets in Britain had increased from 500 to 3,000, out of a total of 20,000 petrol stations in Britain. Since the recent lead-free petrol week, sales of the cheaper lead-free fuel had risen from 1.6 to 2.4 per cent of the petrol market. "In most parts of the country there has been a dramatic increase in availability", she said on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme.

Fraser group vows to phase out CFCs

By Ruth Gledhill

The House of Fraser group, which includes Harrods, is to ban all aerosol products containing chemicals which destroy the Earth's ozone layer.

Mr Mohamed Al-Fayed, chairman of Harrods, said all aerosols containing CFC (chlorofluorocarbon) compounds would be phased out in the new year. Suppliers have been asked to come up with alternatives.

A spokesman for the House of Fraser said the decision had been taken "in the public interest and in response to

government initiatives on the environment".

ICI, which makes CFCs but which is building two chemical plants to produce ecologically safe substitutes, said the group "is just one of a number of people who have voted with their feet".

"Obviously the move away from CFCs is having some impact on our business. But it is not disastrous. We believe the world must move away from these products."

Mr John Beishon, chief executive of the Consumers' Association, said: "This is

welcome news. We hope that other responsible retailers will follow this example and help bring an end to sales of these environmentally dangerous products."

Retail and credit groups said shoppers were spending sensibly in the sales around the country.

Figures are slightly up on last year in most stores after a slow pre-Christmas period. Few shoppers are overspending with store or credit cards.

Mr Michael Wilsey, assistant director of the Retail Consortium, said early feed-

back from retailers suggested that sales figures were "up to expectations" and running at a similar level to last year.

He said there was little regional difference in sales figures, in spite of fears that shoppers in the South were tightening their belts.

"I expect the sales will be a little fling for most people before the belt tightening starts."

Mr Malcolm Hurston, of the Retail Credit Group, said buying by deferred payment was running at a similar level to last year.

Police report fewer drunken drivers

By Rodney Cowton, Transport Correspondent

A number of police forces yesterday reported substantial falls in the impact of alcohol on driving over Christmas.

Nottinghamshire police said there had been a 50 per cent reduction in drivers involved in accidents and found to be over the permitted level of alcohol. Bedfordshire police said that out of 3,000 motorists checked, 41 were over the limit, out of 461 breathalysed.

Although some forces say they have not stepped up their

drink-driving campaign over Christmas, but have maintained their standard campaign, most have done so, and are planning to extend it over the new year weekend. Official figures on the national impact of the drink-driving campaign are expected to be released on Wednesday by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Supt Roger Storey, head of Nottinghamshire police traffic division, said that out of 2,264 tests administered between December 19 and 28 only 64

drivers were found over the legal limit. That was 2.8 per cent, compared to 10 per cent in its normal testing. The 64 drivers arrested compared to 94 last year.

Out of 322 drivers involved in accidents only 11 had "positive" breath test results showing they were over the limit. That compared with the 23 arrested last year having been involved in an accident and found to be over the alcohol limit.

Supt Derek Bristow of Cambridgeshire police said his men were pleasantly surprised at the number of people not drinking, or making alternative arrangements to get home. Some police forces had mixed results. South Yorkshire reported the number of failed breath tests between December 19 and 28 declining from 101 at Christmas 1987 to 84 this year, but injury accidents rose to 64 with 85 casualties, compared to 53, with 71 casualties, a year earlier.

Courts and prisons may get video link

By Peter Evans, Home Affairs Correspondent

A study to see whether remand hearings could be conducted by linking magistrates' courts and jails by video was announced by Mr John Patten, Home Office Minister of State, yesterday.

If feasible, defendants in custody might no longer have to appear before a court for further remand.

The aim is to reduce pressure on staff and jails and avoid delays. The first stage is the study will be completed by mid-1989.

The study will involve five establishments with a high proportion of remand prisoners: Risley, Birmingham, Wormwood Scrubs, Bristol and Lewes. About 12 magistrates' courts near the prisons will be visited to see if the scheme would be practicable.

Defendants pleading guilty in Crown Courts are less likely to receive an immediate custodial sentence, according to a Home Office report yesterday. And those who do tend to be given shorter sentences.

The report was of the first detailed study of Crown Court sentencing practice. It showed that black and Asian defendants were more likely than whites to plead not guilty.

Seal pups could be next victims of North Sea epidemic

By Thomson Prentice, Science Correspondent

The epidemic that has killed thousands of seals in British waters could strike again next year, scientists said yesterday.

Although the epidemic appears to have ebbed in recent weeks, researchers believe that a second wave will occur when the next generation of seal pups is born. The most likely reason for the decline in the outbreak is that most of the surviving seals infected with the virus causing the disease have developed a natural immunity to it.

However, pups born to them next year will be vulnerable because antibodies passed to them in their mothers' milk are likely to give them only temporary protection.

Dr Randal Munro, a veterinary pathologist, who is helping to co-ordinate the scientific response to the epidemic at the Moredun Research Institute in Edinburgh, said: "Deaths among seal pups from the disease are inevitable next year. There is nothing we can do to prevent them. The only question is how many will die."

So far, 2,731 common seals around the British coast are known to have been killed by the virus, which belongs to the morbillivirus group that includes rinderpest and canine distemper. Another 14,000 have been killed in northern European waters.

The true figures are believed to be much higher, with many thousands of the animals dying at sea. However, the Sea Mammal Research Unit in Cambridge, which has been monitoring the outbreak since last July, said yesterday that in recent weeks fewer than one

seal death a day had been reported, compared with a peak in the autumn of about 30 deaths a day.

About 20,000 common seals inhabit British waters, and several thousand pups are born every June and July. There are much larger populations of grey seals, but they seem able to survive the infection, Dr Munro said.

A vaccine has been developed against the virus but scientists acknowledge that it is impossible in practice to vaccinate a wild population of the animals.

Whatever the scale of the outbreak in 1989, researchers believe that another larger epidemic will occur some years later. As time passes, natural immunity to the virus will decline until a stage is reached when large populations of the animals again become vulnerable to it.

Coastal pollution campaigners may report the Anglian Water Authority to the European Commission for discharging sewage into the sea at Southend, producing water with viral and bacteria counts that breach EEC limits.

Protesters yesterday delivered bottles of Southend seawater and samples of cockles and mussels to Downing Street, along with a petition signed by 5,000 people calling for full sewage treatment for Southend and scores of other British resorts which fail EEC standards.

Among the group, which included representatives of resorts in Cornwall, East Anglia and the north of England, was Dean Levy, aged 11, of Shoeburyness, who was paralysed and taken into intensive

care two days after swallowing mouthfuls of sea water while canoeing with friends last year at Southend.

Although doctors have not confirmed a link between the virus responsible for Dean's paralysis and the canoeing incident, his parents believe he was infected by one of the viruses which samples have shown are present in sea-water there. They include salmonella, poliomyelitis and enteroviruses including coxsackie virus, implicated in meningitis.

Mr David Levy, Dean's father, said: "Before Dean swallowed the water he was a fantastic little boy, swimming, horse-riding and playing football. Now that's all gone. You can stick a pin in his legs and he doesn't feel the pain."

Dean's case is one of several taken up by a new group, South Essex Against Sewage (SEAS), which yesterday accused the Government of "fattening up" water authorities for privatization, encouraging them to maximize their profits by installing sewage outfalls instead of more expensive treatment works.

The Anglian water authority, which installed an outfall pipeline at Southend last summer after the beaches were threatened with closure, yesterday described the service provided to the town as satisfactory.

Essex County Council said it was "gravely concerned" about water cleanliness. The county, which wants a full sewage treatment works, added: "The results we were getting at one time were quite frightening. Lately they have been a lot better."

Girls hope to dance away with £1,500



Five teenage dancers rest between auditions yesterday for the Digital Genie Awards at the Royal Academy of Dancing in Battersea, south London. Kim Miller, left, from Australia, Kathy Maddock, from the Royal Ballet School, London, Fiona Munro, from Australia, Amanda Whittle, from South Africa, and Fleur Litika, from Australia, hope to win the gold medal and £1,500 first prize in a public performance at the London Palladium on Sunday.

Woman dies after hearing intruders

A woman heard her mother's plea for help on the telephone minutes before she collapsed and died from a heart attack after burglars ransacked her home.

Mrs Gladys Winstanley heard Mrs Karen Grates, aged 82, her mother, tell how she could hear the sound of intruders in the upstairs bedrooms of the terraced house in Tennyson Street,

Bootle, Merseyside. Mrs Winstanley, aged 52, who was calling from a payphone at a police station, told her mother that she would fetch help straight away.

Police got into a car, taking Mrs Winstanley with them and went to the house less than a half a mile away. But Mrs Grates was found in the hall.

She was found to be dead on arrival at hospital.

Police said Mrs Grates had suffered head injuries but a post mortem examination revealed that she died from a heart attack. Police believe that she collapsed and fell down the stairs probably after she saw the burglars or simply the mess they had caused.

Portfolio

There was no winner in yesterday's portfolio game. Wednesday's £4,000 prize was shared by two winners, not one, as stated. They were Major John Doyle, from Brook Farm Road, Cobham, Surrey, and Mr Frank Edwards from Worcester Road, Langland, Swansea.

Case of the raped patient

Victim rejected by doctors

By Patrick O'Hanlon

A patient raped in her home by a doctor was struck off the lists of two general practitioners because she made them feel "threatened" and "at risk".

The doctor, Ramesh Choudhury, aged 47, was jailed for 10 years in September for drugging then raping the woman on a late-night house call. Despite the conviction, two practices in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, refused to have Miss Elaine Day, aged 30, on their lists.

Miss Day claimed she was told to leave the all-male practice at Millfield Health Centre, Sunderland, where she had been a patient since childhood, when the rape case began. She moved to another area and was found a place at Southwick Health Centre by the Sunderland Family Practitioner Committee (FPC).

She then received a letter informing her that she was to

be removed from that practice. She was reinstated only after the FPC intervened, promising she would be seen "whenever possible" by the practice's part-time female doctor and was advised never to be alone at home when a male doctor called.

Mr John Allan, deputy administrator of Sunderland FPC, said: "The doctors said that the rape was the reason she was being asked to move. I think they felt at risk because she was quoted in newspaper reports saying she would never feel safe with a male doctor again and wouldn't have a male doctor in her house."

The doctors were not suggesting the rape allegation had been false. Mr Allan emphasized: "Even so, they still felt threatened. For the doctor/patient relationship to work, each must have confidence in the other." Doctors

were not bound to explain why a patient was struck off.

"She was with the Southwick practice for some months and the doctors there were possibly acting defensively," Mr Allan said. "It was felt to be in everybody's best interest if she got on the list of a female doctor. We arranged that she be reinstated and seen by the female partner, whenever possible."

Miss Day said yesterday that she "just cried" when the letter arrived. "If there had been a not guilty verdict I could have understood the doctors not wanting me on their lists but the man concerned was found guilty and jailed," she said.

Miss Day has agreed to be identified. "I need to have publicity if anything is to be done to stop this happening again," she said. "Far from losing my good name, this is the only way I can clear it."

Bullet taken from man after 36 years

By Ruth Gledhill

A bullet, which wounded an Army officer in the leg 36 years ago has been recovered from his head.

Major Richard Bingley, aged 68, went into hospital suffering from severe irritation and throbbing behind his left eye.

"The surgeon told me the operation was a great success. They found a bullet behind my eye socket."

Major Bingley was shot in Korea in 1952, during an attack on a hill, while serving as a captain with 1st Battalion the Welch Regiment.

Four bullets hit him in the thigh, but there were only three exit holes.

During the same battle, a hand grenade blew out his left eye, his nose was injured and his skull cracked.

But he is confident that, if the bullet had been behind his

eye all the time, surgeons would have found it when they rebuilt his head.

"The bullet has worked its way round my body, from my leg to my eye socket," he said. "I first noticed it in July. I thought there was a foreign body in my eye but not for an instant did I think it might be a bullet."

"I did wonder where that bullet had gone but I had not given it a thought for years."

Major Bingley, from Newton Abbot, Devon, was also wounded during the Second World War at Dunkirk, Sicily and Arnhem. St Dunstan's, the charity for those blinded in war, arranged the operation.

"The surgeon asked me if he could keep the bullet and I said yes. I supposed he wanted it for the museum. After all, I have had it for 36 years, haven't I?"

Teachers' stress to be studied

By Douglas Broom Education Reporter

More than 2,000 teachers in England and Wales are to be monitored in a research programme to discover the extent of stress in and out of the classroom, to be launched in the new year.

The year-long project is being sponsored by the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, in an attempt to determine how serious the problem is.

In recent years there have been claims that teachers are suffering from increased levels of stress but so far there has been no systematic national study. As well as asking them about the job's difficulty, researchers from the £10,000 project at Manchester University's Institute of Science and Technology will measure teachers' blood pressure

When words fail the tourist

By David Tytler, Education Editor

A foreign tourist travelling in Scotland unable to speak a language other than his own has great difficulty in making himself understood, unlike the Scottish traveller abroad.

A Spanish resident, posing as a tourist, found the city airport almost monolingual, with foreign language signs only in the toilets. Hiring a car and buying an airline ticket was virtually impossible.

The story is told in a survey by the Scottish Association for Language Teaching. Mr Iain Hirschfeldt, its vice-chairman - his mother was Scottish, his father Polish - said yesterday: "We knew things were bad when it came to foreign language teaching in

Scottish schools, but what we found was pretty shocking. Others can choose to communicate with us but we, in Scotland, have no choice."

Mr Hirschfeldt, an advisory teacher in Fife who speaks fluent French and German and a smattering of Polish, added: "We had hoped that things might have been better in Glasgow after the recent international garden festival."

The only bright spot was the tourist information office, where staff were proficient in French and German, although not Spanish. But the city clearly has work to do before 1990 when it is to be European City of Culture.

Glasgow Airport was un-

repentant, although it scored heavily when the young woman who answered the call from The Times let it be known she was fluent in both French and Spanish. Her obviously English boss said: "I am learning to speak Scottish."

The lack of double language signs at the airport seems to be the fault of its English chiefs. "It is BAA policy to sign in English unless there are obvious areas where dual signing would be appropriate."

In Moffat, near Dumfries, the police are, at least, keen to get through to French visitors. All officers carry documents explaining in French that parking on a double yellow line is "une grave erreur".

OPEN BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY
9am-5.30pm

SALE ON NOW!

FINE SAVINGS ON FURNITURE
CARPETS AND BEDS.
WITH INTEREST FREE CREDIT*

3 PIECE SUITE
*Normal Price £1,799
SALE PRICE
£1,439

THE HOGARTH COLLECTION
Stylish design and superb comfort are beautifully combined in this elegant suite. Its frame is crafted from selected quality hardwood, classical sweeping arms and the ivory damask cover give the suite timeless appeal.

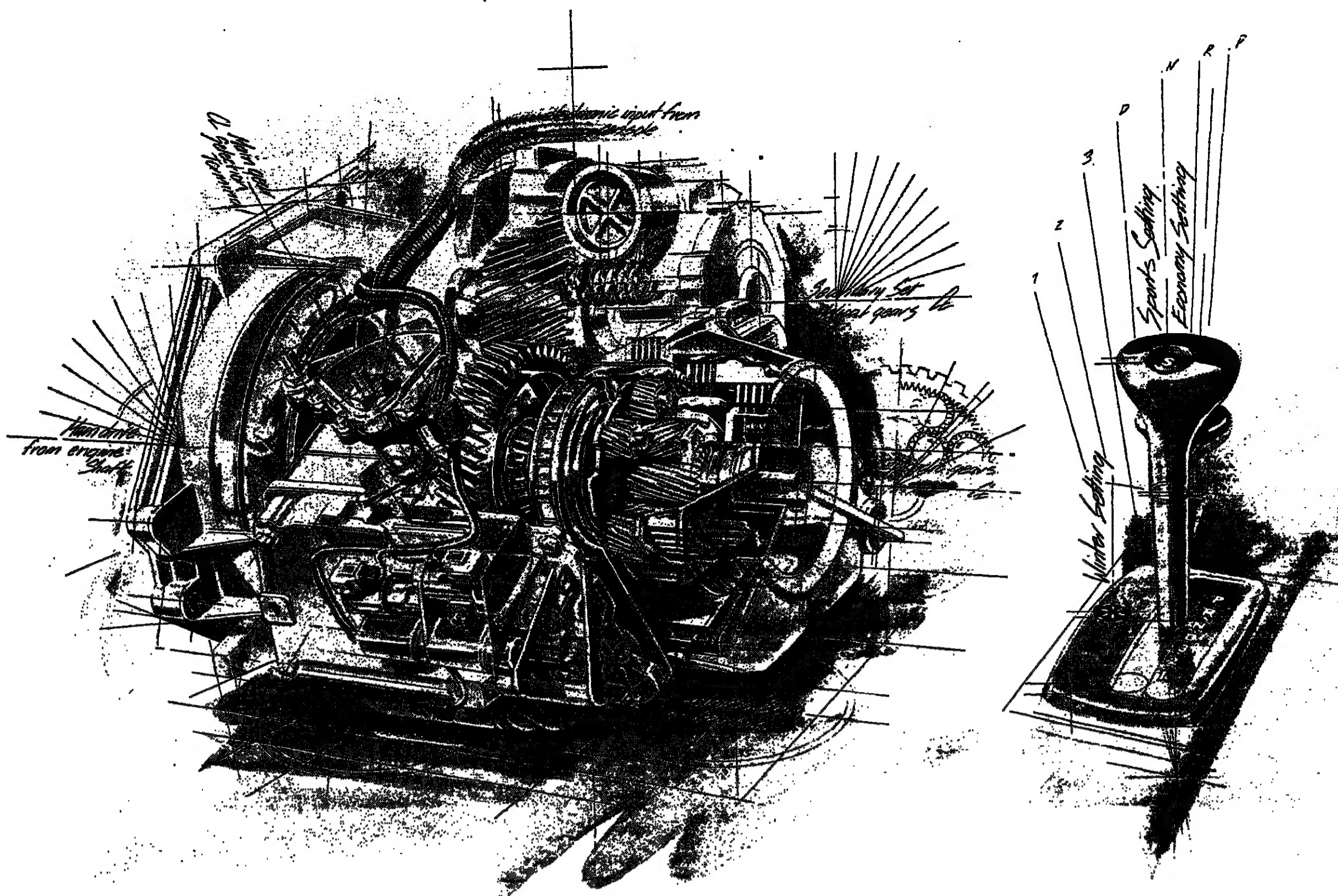
Individual prices:
3 Seater Sofa *NORMAL PRICE £915 SALE PRICE **£825**
2 Seater Sofa *NORMAL PRICE £779 SALE PRICE **£699**
Chair *NORMAL PRICE £442 SALE PRICE **£385**

THE KENSINGTON SQUARE DINING FURNITURE RANGE
A superb quality, Georgian style dining group, made in the finest mahogany veneers with hand finished inlays. The china cabinet is enhanced by subtle interior lighting and a mirrored back.

*Subject to status. Ask for written details. Licensed credit brokers.
*Normal Price - is the price we have previously offered the goods for. All stock subject to availability.

M A P L E S

OF LONDON
145 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON W1. Tel: 01-387 7000



WE FIT EUROPE'S MOST ADVANCED AUTOMATIC. BUT WE CAN'T TELL HOW IT WORKS.

It's not that we don't know how it works. We do. We're just not allowed to tell you.

You see, the gearbox is so technically advanced that we've agreed with its developers to keep the details shrouded in the utmost secrecy.

Still, we can show you how it performs. And, suffice to say, it performs superbly.

Start up, shift into Drive and you're straight into 'Economy' setting.

This saves petrol by shifting into a higher gear as fast as possible, while keeping the revs down.

What happens, though, if you get stuck behind some Sunday driver crawling just above stalling speed?

Then you will find the 'Power' setting rather useful for fast, safe overtaking.

This gives you the full power of the engine right through the gears, by holding each of them for as long as possible before changing up.

Finally, should it actually snow, there's a 'Winter' setting. 'Winter' reduces the chance of wheelspin by bypassing first and second so you set off in third.

Then, as you speed up, it switches back into 'Economy'.

But whatever setting you're in, you'll find the gears remarkably smooth.

Thanks to a computer that reduces the revs momentarily, making each gear change almost imperceptible.

And, in the unlikely event of a fault, it'll switch into 'Economy' to safeguard the transmission.

So is our latest automatic gearbox the most advanced of its kind in Europe?

Ah well, that's for us to know. And you to find out.

**VAUXHALL. ONCE DRIVEN,
FOREVER SMITTEN.**

Refor

Mr. MacGregor was in the trade talks of the... Mr. MacGregor was in the trade talks of the... Mr. MacGregor was in the trade talks of the...

ITV d

over a
fees. v

Whitehall

emphasis
on whites

Fire toll rises

Police wait

Brother bailed

Treat salmon

MacGregor defends the Government's record in the wake of salmonella affair

Reforms needed to make agriculture market-oriented

Mr MacGregor was in the middle of trade talks in Montreal and Common Market negotiations in Brussels the weekend the Currie furore broke. But hasn't his department been slow to react to health warnings issued as early as August?

"We had a new problem here. There is no simple answer to the issue of salmonella. There are hundreds of different types. Even if you think you have taken effective measures it can come back. It can be put in by wildlife, other birds. We had finalized an action programme to minimize the risk to consumers and the announcements were due to be made any way the week after Edwina made her comment.

Codes of practice had been drawn up, booklets printed. We were ready to launch early in the new year an information pack on hygiene in the home."

But wasn't the ministry too easy on the producers? Shouldn't the code of practice have been a mandatory one imposed by law on an industry which had allowed wrong practices to grow?

Mrs Edwina Currie resigned after her remark on salmonella contamination of eggs but the Ministry of Agriculture too has suffered tribulations over the affair. It has been accused of being too willing an ally of the farming lobby, of being slow to react to early salmonella warnings, and of being more concerned with the threat to producers than with public health. However, Mrs Currie may turn out to have done a favour to Mr John MacGregor, the Minister of Agriculture. Answers to questions from *Robin Oakley*, Political Editor, to Mr MacGregor disclose that the Thatcherite revolution has reached farming too.

"You can't produce the documents for a code of practice over night. We had to move quickly and legislation takes longer. There were lots of changes the industry had to undertake. There had to be consultation and discussion... but that is different from being in cahoots with the National Farmers' Union, and I don't listen only to farmers. I consult consumer associations, the food industry, the public.

Our talks were accelerated and we drew up a code of conduct in very quick time. We also set up a working party with the Department of Health to report on what areas of research on salmonella should be pursued. I'm due to get that

any day... But why not a statutory code?

"The new salmonella strain has forced us to look at it all. I do think there's now a case for seeing what can be done by statute backing us, well, not least to reassure the general public. There is no doubt that we take this seriously... Hygiene at home is important. We are giving advice on that. Then there is the food protein element in feed. We have been drawing up measures to tighten up on that."

But doesn't the £19 million to be spent on buying in eggs and culling chickens show the ministry more concerned with producers than with consumers?

"That couldn't possibly be the case. If

we haven't got the product right and minimized all risks that will be much to the industry's detriment. The interests are identical. We've been beefing up the whole food safety side of the department. The Food and Environment Protection Act in 1985 was a major piece of legislation and we have followed that up with extremely intensive work controlling pesticides..."

But isn't the figure quoted that farmers get 17 times as much subsidy as manufacturers in industry?

"Yes, it is quoted — in my speeches. What is so ironic is that for taking what seems necessary measures in a quite unprecedented situation of collapsing markets I have been accused of being in farmers' pockets when the whole thrust of what I have been doing is getting surpluses down, saving money."

This is a reforming government in agriculture as elsewhere... I make no apology for the very necessary reforms designed to give stability to farming in the 1990s.

Does all this mean fewer jobs in agriculture?

"... Some 2,000 farmers have applied to take out 150,000 acres under the set-aside scheme and 24,000 are interested in joining later. But we don't want to see land go back to scrub and waste."

The whole need is to get agriculture more market orientated. That's why I am going, for example, to abolish the

Mrs Edwina Currie, the former Under Secretary of State for Health, turned shy yesterday at the news that the BBC *Radio 4 Today* listeners had voted her runner-up in their annual Woman of the Year awards. At her home in Findern, Derbyshire, Mrs Currie said: "I would like to thank everybody who voted for me. I am flattered and have to confess, a bit embarrassed too."

Some suggest you have been pushed into a compensation package for egg producers whose sales were falling anyway.

"Not at all. I wouldn't entertain that. I wouldn't have been pushed into that kind of measure. I was reluctant to have

to take measures of the sort we did. I'm a very strong believer in value for money for the taxpayer."

What was your argument with the Department of Health which delayed the appearance of that advertisement?

"There has been the closest co-operation between Ken Clarke and my department, between my chief vet and the Chief Medical Officer. I was the one who insisted that the CMO's advice should be a crucial part of the advertisement."

How close did we come to chickens running up Whitehall and Parliament being bombarded with eggs?

"... Many of the 40,000 producers are small businesses on modest incomes dependent on a weekly cheque. Hens go on laying, you know, even when the public stops eating 30 million eggs a day. There was a risk eggs would be dumped in unusual places."

Could the problem have been surmounted without Mrs Currie's forced resignation?

"That was not a matter for me. I was at no point involved in that."

ITV dispute looms over actors' repeat fees, warns Equity

By Andrew Pierce

Commercial television faces its most potentially serious dispute in 30 years over repeat fees for actors.

That was the warning from the actors' union, Equity, which is in deadlock with the Independent Television Companies' Association over an annual agreement on repeat fees which runs out on Saturday. No further meetings are scheduled between the two sides until next week.

The ITV Association, which negotiates the annual contract on behalf of the commercial television companies, has proposed radical changes to actors' fees for repeats and programme sales. They are being recommended because of growing competition for programme sales overseas and the advent of domestic 24-hour television.

Mr Ian McGarry, Equity deputy general secretary, said last night that the situation was potentially critical. "Talks have not broken down but if the television companies do not amend their proposals I cannot see any alternative but for a dispute situation."

"Ultimately, our members would withdraw their services if a compromise is not reached and refuse to negotiate new

contracts. If that happens it means that no new commercial television programmes can be made. It is the first time anything like that has happened for 30 years."

According to Equity, ITV companies want to pay less for repeat programmes shown in the United Kingdom and have unlimited freedom to repeat them.

On programme sales, the union claims that the association wants to scrap residual fees based on a percentage of the actor's fee and replace them with payment based on a percentage of the sale price of programmes, which would save the companies money. The alternative is a one-off buy-out of the actor's rights to fees when a programme is sold.

ITV argues that the high percentage figures for repeats, which were agreed in the days of high inflation, have lost them programme sales overseas.

One senior commercial television executive said: "The high repeat fees were introduced to keep actors' pay in line with inflation and to act as a disincentive to companies to keep churning out repeats. But now it means companies

cannot sell their programmes overseas because of the prohibitive costs of repeat fees, which bear no relation to inflation, which means the artists get no money at all."

"With 24 hour television and increasing global competition we need to have more repeats available for sale and to fill in the blanks caused by late night television."

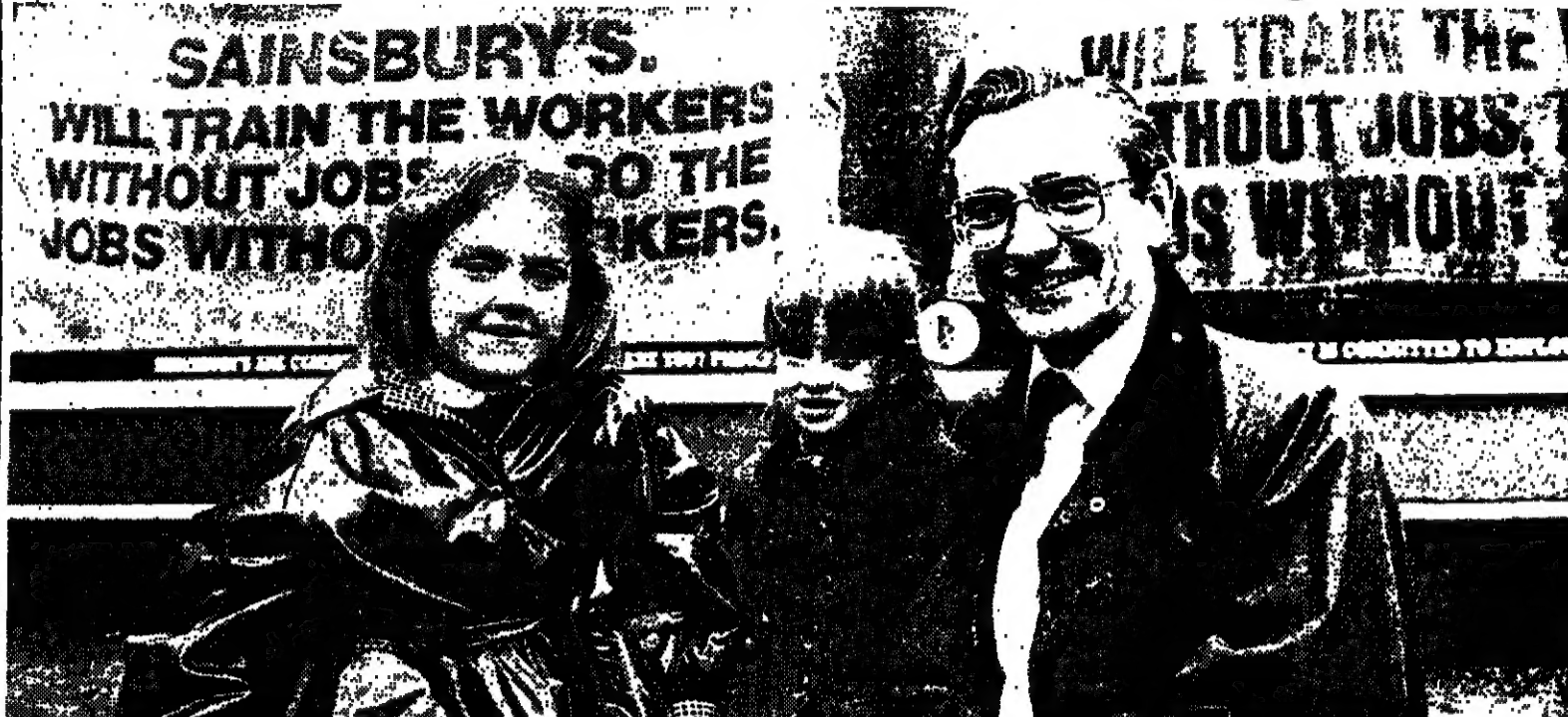
If agreement is not reached it could have serious consequences for television programming which would be paralysed without the support of Equity.

It could also threaten Granada Television's plans to screen a Sunday omnibus edition of *Coronation Street* in competition with BBC's *East-Enders*, one of the most keenly awaited developments in the new year ratings war, because no decision has been made on whether to pay the cast repeat fees for the Sunday showing.

Repeat fees can be very lucrative for actors, who often rely on the income when they are out of work.

An Equity ballot on the issue earlier in the year, which produced a record response, saw 99 per cent of its members vote for the retention of repeat fees.

Fowler's £4m drive to train the jobless



Mr Fowler launches the Employment Training publicity campaign yesterday accompanied by his daughters, Kate, aged seven, and Isobel, aged four.

By Roland Rudd
Employment Affairs Reporter

Three of Britain's biggest trade unions renewed their efforts to withdraw TUC co-operation from the Employment Training programme yesterday, as the Government launched a campaign to increase the number of unemployed people taking part.

Mr Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Employment, predicted that his £4 million publicity drive would double the number of long-term jobless in government training.

But yesterday's endorsement by some of Britain's largest companies, including IBM, Wimpey, Sainsbury, Pilkington, Tarmac and W H Smith,

was tempered by the news that Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons, the construction company, has decided to bypass the scheme in Manchester.

Employment Training is intended to offer an average of six months' training to 600,000 unemployed adults a year. More than 100,000 adults have joined the programme since it was launched in September to replace Job Training and the Community Programme.

McAlpine found that trainees in Leeds were not coming forward because the allowances of about £10 a week more than social security benefit entitlements were not enough. It has not, however, decided to boycott the

scheme. The Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems has published an alternative to Employment Training, which is being operated by two local authorities.

The centre's report was commissioned by the Transport and General Workers' Union, the National and Local Government Officers' Association, the National Union of Public Employees and the GMB general union, although the GMB has subsequently decided to co-operate with the scheme.

The unions are critical of Congress House for failing to implement the TUC's policy of opposition, decided at annual conference.

North Tyneside council will start its own adult training scheme in February. It will take a hundred people each year until 1991 and give them four years' training.

There will be a training allowance of £70 per week. The first £50 of the training allowance is not taxable and the other £20 will be made up in allowances. The net cost per trainee is between £4,000 and £5,000 a year.

The London borough of Waltham Forest has started an alternative training programme which will last up to three years, leading to craft certification, and will be in three industrial sectors where skill shortages have been identified.

Whitehall emphasis on whites

By David Walker
Public Administration Correspondent

The absence of blacks and Asians from the upper reaches of Whitehall is emphasized by a new survey carried out by the Association of First Division Civil Servants which shows fewer than 2 per cent of members are non-white.

According to the survey, which the association conducts each year, 98.1 per cent of its members are white, 1.1 per cent are Asians and 0.5 per cent are black. In round numbers that works out at 26 blacks and 57 Asians among the senior grades.

The association notes that says as much about the institutions from which Civil Servants are recruited as about promotions.

Fire toll rises

A woman of 76 has become the fifth person to die in a fire in Kent in two days. Margaret Fahy died in Westgate, near Margate, when a candle fell over. The others were three people in a houseboat and Mr Cecil Hodge, aged 86, of Gillingham.

Police wait

Police are waiting to interview a man in hospital following the death of a woman after an arson attack at her home in Buller Street, Grimsby. Mrs Jill Harding, aged 38, died in hospital yesterday. A 16-year-old girl and an 11-month-old baby were rescued.

Brother bailed

Ignatius Lester, aged 77, accused of murdering his sister, Mrs Agnes Doran, aged 84, at her home in Pollard Close, Holloway, by suffocation was remanded on bail by magistrates for six weeks at Highbury Corner Court, north London, yesterday.

Trent salmon

A salmon has been caught in the Trent for the first time in two years. Mr Bill Hunt from Sneinton, Nottingham, took the 8lb fish at Colwick Park, Nottingham on Christmas morning.

University course fees

'Flexible prices for overseas students'

By Sam Kiley, Higher Education Reporter

Universities are being encouraged to begin price competition for foreign students for the first time after a decision of the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals to abandon the recommendation that fees should be set nationally.

Although the committee, under the chairmanship of Sir Mark Richmond, this year proposes that fees go up by double the Government's allowance of 5 per cent for inflation made during the autumn statement, it says that

it is a just a "mild form of recommended retail price". The committee proposes to charge £4,300 for arts courses, £5,700 for sciences and £10,500 for clinical courses a year.

Mr Robert Jackson, Under Secretary of State at the Department of Education, is an advocate of a free market in fees and has criticized what he calls the "price fixing cartel" of the universities which agree not to charge less than the minimum recommended, which was until this year set

by the University Grants Committee and adopted by most colleges.

The British prices remain competitive with American universities which cost about 18,000 dollars (£10,000) a year to attend, including maintenance. An arts course in Britain would cost an American about 12,000 dollars (nearly £7,000) allowing for maintenance and a return airfare once a year. But due to the weakness of the dollar the price of the same course has doubled over the last three

years for Malaysian students. The United Kingdom Council for Overseas Students said yesterday that the proposals would mean that British universities would be seen as "once again squeezing every pound they can out of foreign students to boost their coffers."

Mr Tommy Geddes, the council's development officer, said: "The rise is so far more than the rate of inflation that it could backfire because British colleges will be seen as money grabbing."

Press Council report

Editors should play active role on complaints

By Richard Evans, Media Editor

Newspaper editors should take a direct and active part in responding to Press Council complaints and not delegate the responsibility to others, Sir Zelman Cowen, QC, the council's retiring chairman, says today.

"It is clear that some editors do not deem to become personally involved. This does nothing for the standing of the council and not much for their own", he writes in the chairman's foreword to the annual report from the Press watchdog.

The report discloses that complaints to the council increased by almost 12 per cent in 1987 and during the year it handled a record 1,567

cases. More and more were against national newspapers as opposed to the regional press or magazines.

Sir Zelman, who will be succeeded in the QC year by Mr Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, used his foreword to set out a few "clear and simple propositions for the future of an effective voluntary Press Council".

He insisted there must be full compliance with the rules in relation to publication of council adjudications.

"It is simply not compliance to publish in an obscure place in the paper, in minuscule type. At present many papers offend, and some egregiously. Nothing proclaims a disre-

gard for the voluntary Press Council system more obviously than this."

The council should have no executive powers — like the right to fine journalists — but it should have a higher profile and be seen to be defending the freedom of the Press, Mr Blom-Cooper said yesterday in an interview on BBC Radio 4.

What was important was the quality of adjudications and the "shaming" of newspapers that behaved badly.

Mr Blom-Cooper said: "I do not want the Press Council to have any executive powers, and the reasons for that are severely practical. If, for example, the Press Council has power

to fine a journalist, the journalist would then demand, quite properly, a much more formal procedure."

"We would have many more oral hearings and demands for legal representation, simply because journalists would be in jeopardy."

Asked what new things he would introduce, Mr Blom-Cooper said: "I don't think there is anything new, in the sense of any gimmick one could apply. The Press Council has been held in low esteem both among the public and in the Press itself."

"We have got to do something about that. One way to do that is to have a much higher profile for the Press Council."

Electricity privatization

Concern over wasted power

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Power stations are wasting more energy than the entire output from the UK's North Sea natural gas fields by not utilizing the heat they produce while generating electricity.

The Combined Heat and Power Association says the harnessing of such energy could be discouraged when the industry is privatized.

The association said yesterday the privatization Bill allows the new electricity generating companies to avoid their obligation to supply where a private or municipal

power generator agrees to connect directly to individual homes, industrial sites or government offices. Back-up power to independently supplied consumers would be available only at a premium price.

Mr David Green, the association director, said: "We are also concerned that the Government plans to sweep away any commitment to utilizing the excess heat generated by the nation's power stations. This will mean a missed opportunity to im-

prove the air quality in the UK and the tackling of the greenhouse effect."

The Government decision to cut back on spending to promote energy efficiency has also been criticized by the Association for the Conservation of Energy.

Mr Andrew Warren, its director, said the Treasury will this year allocate £15 million to the Energy Efficiency Office at the Department of Energy, compared with £24.5 million last year and £26 million the year before.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION Public Inquiry

A preliminary meeting of the formal investigation into the Clapham Junction railway accident will be held, before Mr Anthony Hidden QC, at 10.30 am on Tuesday, 10 January 1989 in Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, Westminster, London SW1.

Any persons, or their representatives, who were involved in the accident or who may have relevant information they wish to put before the investigation are invited to attend and should inform the Department of Transport in advance by telephoning 01-276 0838.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Harley Street dentist admits drug offences

A Harley Street dental surgeon yesterday admitted more than 100 counts of obtaining the pain-killing drug pethidine by deception.

Richard Degan, aged 50, of Holme Chase, east Finchley, north London, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment suspended for a year, and fined £2,500 plus £250 costs.

Mr Stephen Earnshaw, for the prosecution, told Marlborough Street Magistrates' Court that Degan wrote out prescriptions on the pretext that the drugs were required for stock purposes at his

surgery. In fact, he was obtaining the pethidine, a Class A dangerous drug, to feed his own addiction.

Mr Peter Hughman, for the defence, said Degan first became addicted to the drug after being given it during a series of hernia operations after a skiing accident in 1960.

Degan subsequently remained drug free for 15 years but in January 1987 became addicted by accident after another operation.

"He suffered an appallingly tragic two years", Mr Hughman said.

Washington 'determined' to defuse tensions in escalating dispute on hormone-treated beef

US and Europe to talk as trade sanctions loom

From Christopher Thomas
Washington

American and EEC officials will meet early in the new year to try to head off a trade war after bans or punitive tariffs on some of each other's products, which take effect on Sunday.

The United States has warned privately that any European retaliation will result in counter-measures. But Washington officials say they are determined to defuse the potential crisis, and appear confident that a trade war can be averted, at least for the time being.

Most American beef will not be allowed into the EEC because it contains growth hormones, which are said to

be harmful to health. American health and agricultural officials, however, dispute the European claims, saying that the human body naturally produces more hormones than are to be found in beef treated with them.

A little-known deal between the White House and Congress is being urgently studied by aides to President-elect George Bush under which the new administration should be able to reach international agreements on tough trade issues.

Trade negotiations are often undermined because negotiators cannot guarantee that any deal will be approved by Congress. Under the White House-Congress deal, how-

ever, Congress must vote a straight "yes" or "no" on any trade deal within 90 days, without excessive bargaining or haggling over details.

The arrangement, known in Washington as the "fast track" agreement, associates key members of Congress closely with trade talks, although not as actual negotiators.

American officials say they have not prepared any lists of possible counter-measures to possible European retaliation for imposing 100 per cent tariffs on selected EEC imports. A senior source said that US retaliation would depend on what kind of steps the European nations took.

● BRUSSELS: The decision by the EEC Council of Min-

isters to ban all growth-promoted hormones was taken in 1985 after extreme pressure from the European Consumers' Association and the European Parliament (A Correspondent writes).

All of the EEC countries, except Britain, voted in favour of the ban, although there was no conclusive scientific evidence that hormones are harmful to either humans or animals.

Since then, with the ban coming in for increasing criticism, at least two other member countries — France and Denmark — have said that the prohibition should be lifted. A former Danish Agricultural Minister, Mr Niels Anker Kofoed, who was one of the

EEC farm ministers responsible for approving the hormone ban, is now actively lobbying for it to be lifted.

He recently told the Danish financial daily, *Børsen*, that the EEC was "unwise" in accepting consumer arguments for a total ban, and that "there are no scientific arguments against the hormones". "It is difficult to argue in favour of a ban," he says.

Several years after the Council of Ministers agreed to the ban, consumer groups and the European Parliament were still searching for concrete justification to back up the decision.

After public hearings in late 1987 organized by the Rainbow group of the European

Parliament, which brings together Europe's Green parties, MEPs stated: "After intense and controversial debate, we concluded that genetically-engineered hormones, such as Bovine Growth Hormone (BGH), are the harbinger of an undesirable genetic transformation of agriculture."

This, they claimed, would result in "the accelerated destruction of small and family farms, a further deterioration in the health and well-being of the treated animals, and a drop in the nutritional integrity and quality of food."

The consumers' association comes somewhat closer to producing some scientific evidence. "All toxicological data are far from being conclu-

sive," they stated in a paper issued in late 1987.

"The carcinogenic effect of Oestradiol 17B on animals has been established," they said. "In the case of Trembolone, cell transformation occurs, prompting the *Journal of Cancer Research* to remark that the use of Trembolone in livestock farming should be reconsidered."

M Yves Domzal, director of the association, told a hearing of the European Parliament in November that "scientifically there is still a doubt: that doubt must profit the consumer. The state of science does not allow us to pronounce with absolute certainty on the innocuousness of these substances."

Britain attempts to heal the rift

By John Young
Agriculture Correspondent

Mr John MacGregor, the Minister of Agriculture, yesterday had telephone talks with Mr Clayton Yentler, who will be Secretary for Agriculture in the new Bush Administration, about how to prevent a trade war developing between the European Community and the United States as a result of the EEC ban on American meat imports.

Mr MacGregor was said to be very anxious to lower the temperature at a time when there is already considerable ill-feeling over the breakdown in the latest round of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade negotiations in Montreal earlier this month.

His colleague, Mr Alan Clark, the Minister for Trade, said the situation was "potentially extremely serious", and called for it to be settled by a GATT adjudicator.

The Ministry of Agriculture was yesterday playing down the likely immediate effect on the British food industry of the retaliatory measures so far announced by the US Government. But the Food and Drink Federation, which represents Britain's manufacturers and processors, said it hoped to meet Ministry officials today to express concern about the escalation of the dispute.

The threat of a trade war arises from the EEC decision to ban from midnight tomorrow all imports of meat from cattle that have been treated with growth-promoting hormones. This is in line with its prohibition on the use of such substances in the Community.

In retaliation, the US has authorized a 100 per cent import tariff on a range of European foods, including certain meats, canned tomatoes, coffee extracts and fruit juices.

The EEC ban rests on disputed evidence that hormones are a potential risk to human health. But the Americans claim this conclusion is unjustified and is no more than a pretext for restricting free trade and competition.

Britain opposed the ban from the beginning, but was forced to comply with the EEC directive.

Mr George Foulkes, the Labour Party foreign affairs spokesman, said yesterday that the Government should exploit its "much-valued special relationship" with the US to prevent "this initial skirmish from degenerating into an all-out trade war".

Mr Willy de Clercq, the EEC Trade Commissioner, rejected American claims that the ban was discriminatory. He denounced the retaliatory action as "clearly unjustified, against international obligations, and more specifically against GATT rules".

Mr Clark, interviewed on the BBC's Radio Four, said a very serious principle had been breached by the Americans. The ban on meat imports had nothing to do with trade, but was purely environmental.

Raids into Israel 'bid to wreck' the peace process

From Richard Owen, Jerusalem

As Israeli helicopters yesterday attacked a Shia Muslim base in Lebanon reportedly used by three Arab terrorists who tried to cross into Israel on Wednesday and were shot dead, an army spokesman disclosed that three more infiltrators had tried to enter Israel from Egypt on Wednesday and had also been killed by Israeli troops, although no weapons were found on them.

A search is continuing for a fourth Arab involved in the Egyptian incident, which took place near Mitze Ramon in the Negev desert.

Western diplomats and Israeli officials said the rash of attempted infiltrations into Israeli territory appeared to be part of a desperate effort by extremist Palestinians to undermine the snowballing Middle East peace process, started by the renunciation of terrorism by the Palestine Liberation Organization and Washington's decision to open a dialogue with the PLO.

Sources said that if last week's Lockerbie disaster proved to be the work of an Arab terrorist group, it could be part of the same pattern. "Ironically, the effect could be to give the PLO a final push in the direction of respectability — assuming its disavowals of such acts are believed," one diplomat said.

Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli Prime Minister, said: "It is a fact that the last American decision about having talks with the PLO has encouraged the tendency of violent acts against Israel".

Israeli officials said the spate of violence showed that Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, could not control all Palestinians. There is speculation that some of the extremist anti-PLO factions are being encouraged by Syria.

An Israeli newspaper yesterday published what it said

were details of Mr Shamir's peace plan. It was announced that Mr Moshe Arens, the new Israeli Foreign Minister, will meet his Egyptian counterpart, Dr Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, as well as Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, and European Foreign Ministers in Paris on January 8 during a conference on the reduction of chemical weapons. Mr Arens may also meet Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister, officials said. Although focusing on chemical weapons, the conference would provide an obvious forum for exploration of the Middle East peace process "if enough progress has been made", diplomats said.

In yesterday's incident, West Beirut — a car bomb blew up near a Syrian army checkpoint (Our Correspondent writes). The blast, which wounded one civilian and set four cars alight, was the latest in a series of unclaimed protest attacks against the Syrian military presence.

Rockets fired from Israeli Cobra helicopters slammed into a base controlled by the Shia Muslim Amal militia near Tibnin, nine miles north of the Lebanese-Israeli border. Army sources said the base had provided protection to three terrorists from the Palestine Liberation Front, a Palestinian splinter group, who tried to enter Israel on Wednesday but were killed by paratroopers at the border.

The sources said the gunmen had started their mission from the base, where they had the support of "factors in Amal which helped the initiative of the terror gang". On Monday, three other Arab gunmen were shot dead by Israeli forces at the Lebanese border.

The Israeli newspaper

Yediot Ahronot yesterday published what it claimed was the outline of the Israeli peace plan being formulated in response to the PLO's diplomatic success. This reportedly includes a formula which would enable Israelis to sit at a negotiating table in the presence of Palestinian representatives to discuss "interim arrangements" in the occupied territories, without questioning too closely whether the delegates were PLO supporters or not.

Israeli officials described the report as "very premature and speculative", but said it reflected the debate over the shaping of an Israeli initiative. Under the reported plan, in which Egypt would play a key role, Israel, Jordan and a Palestinian delegation would hold talks on a provisional settlement under the auspices of the United States and the Soviet Union.

● WEST BEIRUT: Yesterday's attack on an Amal base, in which eight militants were said to have been wounded, is clearly a sign of Israeli alarm over the intensification of guerrilla infiltration attempts and the speed of the warming of ties between the Syrian-backed Amal and the Palestinians (Juan Carlos Gumucio writes).

Amal and Mr Arafat's Fatah faction last week reached an agreement in Sidon to end three years of bloody war, and reports in the press say that the accord includes the coordination of operations against Israel.

Indirectly, the raid helps Amal to demand respect as a force at war with the Israeli Army. In the past three years, the militia's opposition to allow Palestinian guerrillas and pro-Iranian militants to stage cross-border attacks has seriously undermined Amal's political power in Lebanon.

Relief for family of French girl hostages



M and Mme Andre Metral, left and centre, read in their Lyons home yesterday of the arrival of their niece, Marie-Laure and Virginie Beille, in Libya. The girls' grandmother, Mme Brigitte Valente, right, joined them for news of the release.

'Gadaffi connection' with capture

From Philip Jacobson, Paris

After 13 months in the hands of Palestinian terrorists, the two little sisters from France were last night safe and well and heading home from Tripoli. A military aircraft sent earlier from Paris collected Virginie and Marie-Laure Valente, aged six and seven respectively, from the Libyan capital after they were formally handed over to the French authorities by representatives of Colonel Gadaffi in a brief ceremony at the French embassy.

An emotional day for the girls had begun six hours earlier with their arrival aboard a boat that docked in the port of Benghazi, apparently after making the long sea crossing from Lebanon. They were flown straight to Tripoli, where their father, Pascal Beille, was waiting to greet them. Official sources expected the group to land at a Marseilles military air base later last night, although their exact destination was not being disclosed.

Behind them in Beirut, Virginie and Marie-Laure left their 31-year-old mother, Mme Jacqueline Valente, and a baby sister, Liberté, who was born in captivity (Mme Valente is now pregnant again). A spokesman for the Abu Nidal group which claims to have seized them and five Belgians — including Mme Valente's lover — from an old

fishing boat in November 1987 yesterday repeated allegations that the remaining captives had been spying for Israel. "We will announce demands for their release at the proper time," Mr Walid Khaled declared in Beirut.

The eventual liberation of the two young girls — originally announced in Beirut over the Christmas weekend but delayed in mysterious and, for waiting relatives, harrowing circumstances — was explained by Mr Khaled as "a humanitarian decision in response to a humanitarian appeal" from Colonel Gadaffi.

The "Gadaffi connection" with the seizure of the hostages now appears to have

been much closer than previously suspected. It seems increasingly possible, indeed, that the Silco was originally intercepted by Libyan gunboats in the Mediterranean. One theory here is that Colonel Gadaffi promptly handed the Valente family and their Belgian companions over to Abu Nidal's Lebanon-based Fatah Revolutionary Council as "hostage fodder". But with the French and Belgian governments apparently in no mood to bargain, and an increasingly effective media campaign building up in France on behalf of the children, both camps concluded that it was time to release the youngest hostages.

Mr George Foulkes, the Labour Party foreign affairs spokesman, said yesterday that the Government should exploit its "much-valued special relationship" with the US to prevent "this initial skirmish from degenerating into an all-out trade war".

WORLD ROUNDUP

Pretoria adds to banning record

Johannesburg — South Africa yesterday banned four more anti-apartheid organizations under its emergency regulations, bringing the total this year to more than 30, higher than at any time since the ban began in 1950 (Gavin Bell writes). All of the banned groups, with one exception, have been opposed to apartheid.

The latest groups, which are prohibited from performing "any acts or activities whatsoever", are the mainly Coloured (mixed race) Western Province Teachers' Union and the Western Cape Students' Congress, the black Democratic Teachers' Union, and the National Detainees' Forum.

A spokesman for Mr Adriaan Vlok, the Minister for Law and Order, said the teachers' unions, which were founded in 1985, had been fuelling demands for an education system inspired by the banned African National Congress.

Romero case collapse

San Salvador — El Salvador's Government says the investigation into the 1980 murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero, shot while saying Mass, has collapsed after a court ruling declared illegal the extradition of a suspect from the United States (Tom Gibb writes). Last year the Government produced the man who says he drove the getaway car as a witness. The driver's employer, ex-army Captain Alvaro Saravia, was detained in Miami and has been awaiting extradition. But El Salvador's Supreme Court ruled that the driver testified too long after the case.

Tamil referendum

Colombo — The Sri Lankan Government has announced that a referendum to decide whether the Northern and Eastern provinces of the island should remain linked will be held on July 5 (Vijitha Yapa writes). Under the accord with India of July, 1987, aimed at ending ethnic strife, it was decided to merge temporarily the two provinces, which are dominated by the island's Tamil minority. The majority Sinhala community has opposed the link since independence in 1948, saying it would be the first step towards an independent Tamil state of Eelam.

Rock ceremony cut

Gibraltar — The Gibraltar authorities have decided to limit the ceremonial guard outside the Governor's residence on the colony into a monthly event, due to the problems and costs of security since the IRA bomb attempt on March 6 (Dominique Searle writes). For many years now the ceremony has been held each Tuesday and is a big tourist attraction which is also popular with schoolchildren.

EEC seeks to prevent repeat American raid on Libyans

From Roger Boyes, Rome

European Community countries are trying to head off a possible US attack on Libya by pressing Colonel Gadaffi to open for public inspection a new factory which Washington believes capable of producing chemical weapons.

This emerged yesterday after a visit to Algeria by Signor Giulio Andreotti, the Italian Foreign Minister.

Italy, as Libya's closest friend in the European Community, has been attempting to defuse the conflict between Tripoli and Washington. The suspected chemical weapons factory, and evidence of links between the Abu Nidal terrorist group and Libya, might propel the outgoing US Administration into implementing military contingency plans for a new raid on Tripoli. That, Italian diplomats believe, would plunge

East-West relations into a deep gloom.

Signor Andreotti told Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, last Saturday that Colonel Gadaffi was almost certainly willing to allow an international inspection of the factory.

Libya says the factory is intended to supply much-needed medicines and pharmaceuticals. The US says it has clear military capability.

On Wednesday, Signor Andreotti was attending a formal lunch with the Algerian leadership in Tipaza when he was telephoned by the West German Foreign Minister, Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who wanted to know if the US had responded to the Gadaffi offer — and how Europe should react in the event of a new US attack.

Two hours after Herr

Genscher's call, the Algerian Foreign Minister was on his way to Tripoli for a hastily arranged meeting with the Libyan leadership.

Colonel Gadaffi, by intervening on behalf of the two French child hostages recently released by the Abu Nidal group, may have wanted to reassure the US that he is a reformed character.

Yet the fact that there is an open communication line between Abu Nidal and Colonel Gadaffi may actually intensify rather than stifle US suspicions. The concerned West European diplomats are thus confronted with a delicate problem of interpretation between an outgoing US Administration, angered by the Pan Am bombing, and the Libyan leadership, whose rhetoric and past performance muddies its real intentions.

Man in the News

CIA veteran's meteoric rise

From Christopher Thomas, Washington

President-elect George Bush's choice this week of Mr Robert Gates, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, as Deputy National Security Adviser will reinforce the formidable foreign policy experience in the Bush team.

Mr Gates, aged 45, a veteran of more than 20 years with the CIA, was assigned to the national security staff in 1974, the year he received a doctorate in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University, Washington.

He returned to the CIA in 1979 and had a meteoric rise over the next seven years, moving through the ranks from assistant to the deputy director to deputy director.

President Reagan nominated him in 1987 to head the CIA. Both the chairman and vice-chairman of the Senate intelligence committee — Senator David Boren and Senator

William Cohen — backed him, but other committee members opposed the appointment because of questions about Mr Gates's actions, or lack of them, in the Iran-Contra fiasco.

He angered many senators when he told them that the National Security Council's management of arms sales to Iran was "primarily a diplomatic activity" — a statement some of them regarded as deliberately misleading.

There was a feeling at the time that he would not be able to stand up to White House pressures. He was widely criticized for failing to inform senators that he suspected that proceeds from arms sales to Iran were being diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras, and he withdrew his name.

Despite congressional criticism, few senators pressed for Mr Gates to be removed from the CIA. But he told associates over the summer that he wanted to move from the agency now it was clear that he would never become director.

His new post does not require Senate confirmation. Mr Bush has nominated Mr Richard Kerr, a veteran of nearly 30 years at the CIA, to replace him.



Mr Gates: Actions in Iran-Contra scandal criticized.

Broadway's critics give \$5m musical a bad break

From Charles Bremner
New York

Legs Diamond, the singing gangster, survives a murder attempt in Broadway's latest multi-million dollar musical and crows: "I'm in show business — only a critic could kill me." He could not argue that better.

Rarely have the barricades of the review industry shown so much glee lacerating a show as they did this week proclaiming *Legs*, the season's would-be blockbuster, a gigantic failure.

The \$5 (\$2.8 million) show, with words and lyrics written by Peter Allen, starring Peter Allen, is staggering on, but the experts give it little time to live. The New York

reviewers have in recent months exercised their stilettoes on two other ambitious shows — the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Coriolanus* and Andrew Lloyd Webber's wildly successful *Phantom of the Opera* — but the blood drawn there was a mere trickle compared with the carnage of *Legs*, which tells the story of a brutal bootlegger who yearns for a life as a song and dance man.

"There is nothing wrong with it that a completely new book, new lyrics, new score and new concept could not fix overnight," said Clive Barnes of the *Handbook of Mr Allen* and Mr Robert Ackerman, the director. "Most of the music appears to take memorability to the point

of clinical amnesia and you go out humming a headache."

For Linda Winer of *Newsday*, the musical "has no charm, no wit, no heart and most conspicuous of all, no point." Howard Kissel of the *New York Post*, normally one of the gentler of his brethren, dismissed the campy, gangster musical as "hopeless" and a "corpse". The dreaded Frank Rich of *The New York Times* must have been howling his metaphors through the nine long weeks of previews at the Mark Hellinger theatre.

Legs Diamond, he said, was "a sobering interlude of minimum-security imprisonment that may inspire you to pull out a pen and

attend to long-neglected tasks like finishing last Sunday's crossword."

It was so bad, even measured on "the Richter scale" of Broadway disasters, that it was not even "the riotous larger-than-life fiasco of which theatrical legends are made". Not even *Coriolanus* earned such a rich put-down. But Mr Rich kept what was obviously meant to be his unkindest cut for Peter Allen's songs: "They are so derivative they make Andrew Lloyd Webber's scores sound idiosyncratic."

Throughout its previews, *Legs*, which comes across as an amalgam of *Gypsy* and *Dolls* and all those other shows about lovable gangsters, suffered from appalling advance press

notices. "Legs Amputated," "Legs Crippled," "Legs Broken," said the headlines as the producers tried to revamp it from day to day.

The show's producer shrugged off the bad reviews yesterday: "With our terrific TV commercial and strong enough word of mouth, we can overcome this adverse criticism."

The musical, which boasts all the complicated computerized sets that have become de rigueur for blockbusters, needs \$300,000 of ticket sales per week to break even.

Not everyone is predicting disaster for *Legs*. The critics panned Mr Lloyd Webber's roller-skating musical *Starlight Express* and it went on to do good business.

Sudan police shoot at demonstrators as strike bites hard

From Andrew Buckoke, Nairobi

Mass demonstrations continued for the third consecutive day in Khartoum and other Sudanese cities yesterday, while the unions' call for a general strike had an overwhelming response, forcing immediate concessions from the tottering coalition administration of Mr Sadiq al-Mahdi, the Prime Minister.

Once the Government announced the cancellation of commodity price rises that had sparked the strike call, protesters in the capital started shouting further demands, especially for an end to the 5½-year old civil war in the south.

Police opened fire in an attempt to disperse them, according to the Sudan News Agency, which is being staffed by volunteers while most of its employees strike.

Telecommunication workers, air traffic controllers and port authority staff brought virtually all links with the outside world to a halt, while the few reports emerging from Khartoum, mainly by radio, indicated that workers in all other sectors came out. Even government offices were reported to be deserted.

The decision to rescind the price increases by an emergency Cabinet session called by Mr al-Mahdi yesterday leaves the Government with the problem of paying for the wage rises of from 50 per cent to 500 per cent it decreed over the weekend in an effort to curb popularity.

The Umma party of the Prime Minister and its remaining coalition partner,

the fundamentalist National Islamic Front must also decide how to react to the withdrawal from the Government of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), the second largest grouping in Parliament. It pulled out on Wednesday in sympathy with the strikers and in protest at the failure of the Government to act on the draft peace agreement the party had signed with the rebel Sudan

Nairobi — Western governments, including the US, have hinted at massive development aid and help in rescheduling Sudan's \$13 billion (£7.25 billion) debt if peace is achieved (Andrew Buckoke writes). However, some of Khartoum's Arab backers see the civil war as protecting or expanding Islam's frontiers.

People's Liberation Army in November.

The Prime Minister and the Islamic Front were unwilling to accept the freezing of Sharia — the Koranic legal code that symbolizes northern Muslim domination for the Christian and animist southerners — before a ceasefire.

The Liberation Army has been fighting for a secular state, greater regional autonomy and more resources for the south, which remains almost totally undeveloped.

Though the focus of the strikers' demands was the removal of the price rises, many northerners are also angry about food shortages, the collapse of services, and the lack of progress towards

peace in the 20 months since Mr al-Mahdi was elected.

Similar mass protests and strikes led the Army to overthrow former President Nimeiri in 1985, and establish the civilian regime a year later.

Umma is the largest party in Parliament and, along with the Islamic Front, commands a bare overall majority, given that 40 of the southern seats are empty because of insecurity during the elections.

The DUP also pulled out of the governing coalition between August, 1987, and April this year. For nine months, there was no formally constituted government.

When the new coalition was formed, it included for the first time the Islamic Front, which exacted the privilege of drafting a new form of Sharia to replace that inherited from President Nimeiri and never repeated, despite repeated promises.

The result, which many observers say is harsher than its predecessor, awaits legislative action. It remains to be seen whether the northerners are sufficiently tired of the war to continue the protests and strikes that might force Mr al-Mahdi to reject the Islamic Front's insistence on Sharia, and follow the DUP's suggested road to peace.

International pressure has been growing as news of the carnage in the south has trickled out to the world. More than one million people are believed to have died, mostly by starvation, in 5½ years — including probably more than 250,000 this year.

Yugoslav housewives skirmish for daily bread



Yugoslav housewives, in a queue for bread in the republic of Macedonia, setting on a young woman who appears to be taking more than her fair share of cheap loaves. This photograph, by Srđan Zivkovic, epitomizing Yugoslavia's troubles, was voted news picture of the year by Tanjug, the national news agency.

The Government faces the prospect of having to seek emergency economic powers after failing to push a 1989 budget and reforms through Parliament, and will start the new year with temporary finance (Reuters reports).

Inflation reached 228 per cent in Yugoslavia last month. The year saw almost 1,400 strikes, while economic austerity sharpened ethnic rivalries. Newspapers, union leaders and strikers have called for Mr Branco Mikulic, the Prime Minister, to be sacked.

French leaders fall foul of public

From Susan MacDonald Paris

The majority of French people — 53 per cent — are unhappy with the way France is governed. More than half of those asked in an opinion poll by *Paris-Match* would decide against the Prime Minister, M Michel Rocard, in a parliamentary vote of confidence if they were MPs.

While the French are becoming steadily more disillusioned with the Socialist Government voted into power only six months ago, they are also under no illusion that the right would do any better. When asked how they would vote in a hypothetical immediate general election, the almost neck-and-neck percentages which produced a minority government during the summer remained stable — 51 per cent would back the left and 49 per cent the right.

M Rocard has fallen 13 points since September to a present popularity rating

of 44 per cent, with a "no-confidence" rating of 39 per cent. President Mitterrand, despite trying to remain aloof from the Government's troubles, has dropped nine points in the same period to a popularity rating of 54 per cent.

The poll was taken a week before Christmas when the French public had become fed up with transport, postal and airline strikes that had dragged on through the autumn, although many defended the strikers' battle to obtain wage increases at least in line with inflation. But the Prime Minister's fellow Socialists and opponents on the right fared worse.

The "no-confidence" ratings of M Raymond Barre, M Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and M Jacques Chirac, the three main conservative leaders, stand at 45 per cent, 47 per cent and 50 per cent respectively, outstripping their popular-

ity ratings by between eight and 13 points. The public's lack of confidence in M Rocard's Socialist colleagues, M Laurent Fabius, M Pierre Bérégovoy and M Lionel Jospin, is rated at 51 per cent, 49 per cent and 44 per cent.

Most unpopular is the National Front leader, M Jean-Marie Le Pen, with a 76 per cent no-confidence vote, closely followed by M Georges Marchais, the Communist Party chief.

As the French enter 1989, the revolution's bicentenary year, 57 per cent of those questioned are optimistic over the chances for world peace while they remain equally divided on whether it will be a good year for France. However, 68 per cent are optimistic about their personal lives. The French appear to have faith in themselves and not in their political leaders — circumstances that pertained in 1789.

Criminal code reform

Russia to retain law on dissent

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

A Soviet legal expert has disclosed that only one of the two articles under which political dissenters have been prosecuted in the past will be abolished when the new criminal code is introduced.

Article 70 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code, which deals with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda", is to remain in force but will be more closely defined.

Interviewed in the government newspaper *Izvestia*, Dr Sofiya Kelina said it had been decided to retain Article 70 because the Soviet Socialist state, "like any other law-

prosecution required, brought condemnation from human rights groups in the West.

Dr Kelina said all members of the working party had agreed on the need to retain Article 70, but the wording would be changed and the penalties reduced. At present it carries a maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment.

The old Article 70 is to be included in a special section of the new criminal code dealing with crimes against the state, although with a different title. According to Dr Kelina, it will apply only to people involved in "public appeals for the overthrow or betrayal of the state by force". The punishment would be "significantly lighter", she said.

The modification in the wording of Article 70 seems designed to meet many of the criticisms made by Western human rights organizations. It means that individuals should no longer be prosecuted for statements made in private, and that calls for a change in government will no longer be considered crimes, unless there is a threat of violence or the use of force.

governed state", had to be able to defend itself.

Dr Kelina was a member of the working party which drafted the new "fundamentals of the criminal code". These were published for nationwide discussion two weeks ago.

The Article to be abolished is the much-criticized section of 109 which deals with "anti-Soviet slander" and "defamation of the state". It was introduced in 1966 and inaugurated nearly 20 years of prosecutions against political dissenters and cultural figures. The indefinite nature of the charge, which could be interpreted as broadly as the

Mao widow mystery

Peking (Reuters) — The mystery surrounding Mao Tse-tung's jailed widow, Jiang Qing, deepened as authorities denied a report in an official Chinese newspaper which said she was critically ill. "Jiang Qing is suffering from ordinary diseases of old age. She is not in danger," a spokesman for the Justice Ministry said. "She is still serving her sentence," he added.

Three charged Ship capsizes

Essen (Reuters) — Two bank robbers and their female accomplice were charged with murder, attempted murder, kidnapping and robbery during a bizarre three-day hostage drama in West Germany last August during which three people died.

Skydive death

Johannesburg (Reuters) — A South African skydiver fell to his death after colliding in mid-air with another parachutist during a holiday rally.

Bomb search

Amsterdam (Reuters) — A search for unexploded bombs left over from the Second World War is to be carried out at Schiphol airport here before new hangars are built, Dutch officials said.

New York (Reuters) — Three seamen were rescued in stormy seas after their Cypriot-registered container vessel carrying a crew of 11 capsized off the north-east coast of the United States.

Pistols seized

Stockholm (AP) — Swedish police have seized several large-calibre pistols that could be linked to a suspect accused of murdering Olof Palme, the former Prime Minister, *Aftonbladet* newspaper reported.

Cactus plea

Madrid (Reuters) — Senior Jose Maria Ruiz Mateos, a former tycoon awaiting trial on fraud charges, has been released on bail seven weeks after he sent a cactus to court "to prick Spanish justice into action".

Pickfords Travel

CUT THE PRICE OF YOUR SUMMER HOLIDAY.

£50 OFF

per person on all overseas holidays worth £1,000 + per person.

£25 OFF

per person on all overseas holidays worth £400 + per person.

£15 OFF

per person on all overseas holidays worth £250 + per person.

£10 OFF

per person on all overseas holidays worth £100 + per person.

Choose any summer holiday from the brochures in our shops, and we will give you the relevant per person discount above. For just £20 per person deposit, the booking is made! This offer ends on January 31st. So go to your nearest Pickfords Travel Shop now and pick up your summer holiday at a snip!

The pick of the travel offers
OVER 330 SHOPS NATIONWIDE

Only
£20 deposit
per person
required



New Japanese Cabinet tainted by old scandal

From Joe Joseph, Tokyo

She said: "The truth is that our people face the same common problems — poverty, disease, slums and ignorance — and it is to the vanquishing

But most attention is likely to be focused on the meetings between Mr Gandhi and Miss

It follows that in this area as well, there must be doubts over how far an improvement in relations between Miss Bhutto and Mr Gandhi will be reflected in improvements on the ground.

It also has seriously dented Mr Takeshita's reputation as a skilled backroom manipulator who always does his homework and leaves nothing to chance.

into every inch of his new Cabinet's past. The Prime Minister has said that he will stand by Mr Hasegawa.
Leading article, page 13

Immediately after being picked for the post, Mr. Hasegawa, aged 76 and a former Transport Minister, grinned: "It is because I have nothing to do with Recruit that I am sitting here before you like this." He went on to say that he would thoroughly investigate the Recruit scandal and help restore the public's



Mr Takashi Hasegawa: Had cash backing from Recruit.

Gorbachov fears Kabul collapse

It has become obvious, however, that Moscow — with intimate knowledge of its client — does not share that confidence and fears an embarrassing collapse following the withdrawal. The

conclusion that the Soviet Union will leave Kabul to face the music alone in six weeks' time, surrounded by well-armed guerrillas in the mountains, who are eager for victory and for revenge against the communists.

MFI SALE NOW ON – OPEN TODAY 9 – 8
SAT 31st DEC 9-6, OPEN HOLIDAY MONDAY 9-6 (N. IRELAND FRI 9-9)

SALE






UP TO

30% OFF
Hygena KITCHEN

CABARET 300mm BASE UNITS
SALE **£19.99**
TICKET PRICE ~~£26.99~~

CABARET 300mm WALL UNITS
SALE **£19.99**
TICKET PRICE ~~£29.99~~

CHECK OUT THESE EXAMPLES— SEE HOW MUCH YOU CAN SAVE

					
25% OFF	CABARET • CORAL				
TICKET PRICE	£56.99	£59.99	£69.99	£39.99	£79.99
SALE PRICE	£42.74	£39.99	£49.99	£29.99	£59.99
30% OFF	GREY FABRIKA • BASKETWEAVE • VELLUM • PASTICHE				
TICKET PRICE	£59.99	£74.99	£89.99	£54.99	£119.99
SALE PRICE	£39.99	£49.99	£59.99	£34.99	£83.99
30% OFF	CONWAY • WESTMINSTER				
TICKET PRICE	£79.99	£89.99	£114.99	£74.99	£134.99
SALE PRICE	£47.99	£59.99	£74.99	£49.99	£93.99
25% OFF	ALBANY • SHERWOOD • SANDRINGHAM				
TICKET PRICE	£34.99	£34.99	£124.99	£89.99	£144.99
SALE PRICE	£24.99	£24.99	£89.99	£64.99	£104.99
30% OFF	CANTERBURY • HENLEY • VICTORIAN PINE				
TICKET PRICE	£104.99	£104.99	£139.99	£37.99	£164.99
SALE PRICE	£79.99	£79.99	£104.99	£74.99	£124.99
30% OFF	KENSINGTON • BUCKINGHAM				
TICKET PRICE	£112.99	£119.99	£149.99	£112.99	£174.99
SALE PRICE	£89.99	£84.99	£119.99	£89.99	£139.99

KENSINGTON — solid oak door and drawer fronts with traditional styling but finished in stunning white. Ceramic handles add a cool touch.

WESTMINSTER — A veneer door in the natural shade of light oak. All the cabinets illustrated. Ticket Price \$1429.82. **Save \$471. £958.**

25% OFF

CABARET — Compact and cool with clean lines and a curve on the vertical edge. All the cabinets illustrated. Ticket Price £600.90. **Save £185.** **SALE £415.**



20%

INGHAM — Rich, dark and truly regal — the
onal choice for a panelled door. All the cabinets
ted. Ticket Price £1222.87. **Save £370**

**UPTO 50 UNITS IN 23 STYLES
EVERY UNIT REDUCED!**

UP TO £2000 INSTANT CREDIT
 available with the MFI Credit Card, subject to status APR 31 3%
 (table with Standing Order) Written quotation from any,
 on request. MFI are licensed Credit Brokers.

Ring 01-2000200—for the location of your nearest MFI store.
DELIVERY SERVICE AVAILABLE—ask in store for details.
 Accepts Visa, Connect, American Express and Diner's Club—accepted

■ All prices are for set and jewelry only and are for cabinets only. Room prices do not include taxes, smokes, ornaments, worktops, appliances, accessories, etc. Cornercabinet rails, continuous plinth, on or off midrail units, etc. are available as optional extras. All sizes approve. All items subject to availability. "Ticket Price" is the price charged in MFI stores not necessarily for the same size as the unit in this advert. Delivery is within cabinet. New "J" style entrance and ceiling entrance. All hygiene fittings secure. You can contact the Hygiene Fittings Service on 0800 224 797 or 24-hour answering service 01246 244 244. Hygiene products and materials may vary from time to time. See also the Hygiene Fittings Service on 0800 224 797 or 24-hour answering service 01246 244 244. Hygiene products and materials may vary from time to time. See also the Hygiene Fittings Service on 0800 224 797 or 24-hour answering service 01246 244 244.

TAKE A LOOK AT US NOW!

Japanese
cabinet taint
old scandal

SPECTRUM

Thinkers' guide to the year ahead

How will we fare in 1989?

The Times asked experts from

13 research and forecasting

organizations for their predictions

on the important issues at home

and abroad in the new year

WORLD AFFAIRS

Francois Heisbourg, director, International Institute for Strategic Studies; privately-funded research on defence

Russia is of crucial strategic importance. I would look out for the political decision which President Gorbachov has got to take in 1989 on Soviet military expansion for the next five years. If it is not made public, I would start worrying.

A difficult and acrimonious debate between the United States and Europe will develop on the issue of burden sharing, particularly in the wake of inevitable further reductions in American defence spending. There will also be divergence between the US and Europe on how to deal with the Soviet Union. America will react to what it perceives as Fortress Europe. A row on defence exports may erupt, particularly after Congress reconvenes on January 20.

ENVIRONMENT

Richard Sandbrook, executive director, International Institute for Environment and Development; non-profit policy research unit

A growing problem of environmental destruction caused by poverty in the Third World. An increasing awareness by industrialized countries of the need to do something about the ozone layer and climatic problems, coupled with a realization that they will have to address problems of environment and poverty in the developing world.

COMMUNICATIONS

George Wedell, director of European Institute for the Media, Professor of Communications Policy, University of Manchester; funded in part by Dutch football pools

Take-up of the new Anglophone satellite TV channels will be slow. Prospects for cable TV are disastrous in the short term, particu-

larly after the Government's decision against fibre optics; rather better in the long term, after American companies, perhaps, have made huge investments.

Community radio will take off. It is cheap and cheerful. This will cause problems for Radio 1 and 2, less so for Radio 3 and 4.

Starting a newspaper, even with new technology, requires a long purse. Even *The Independent* is not yet fully established. Questions about the concentration of the media will become more acute, leading to political pressure.

SOCIETY

Nicholas Albery, chairman, Institute for Social Inventions; an alternative think-tank

The pronouncements of President Gorbachov over the past year have pointed to an emerging planetary consciousness. But it is still stuck within hidebound boundaries. Solutions to problems are difficult because diplomacy is conducted by big blocs operating like the Titanic. There will be more attempts to solve problems on a human scale.

That is the significance of movements such as the Scottish Nationalists and the Estonians. Nationalism can be a helpful development in terms of human-scale plans. In eastern Europe there will be emerging confederations of small nations. In South Africa, look out for the groundswell movement, pushing for cantonization on the Swiss model.

Russia will experience an exploding youth movement, like the US and Europe in the Sixties. Gorbachov will crack down hard.

Global economics are also like the Titanic. Huge corporations appear to be roaming the Darwinian jungle with an imperative to take over smaller companies. There will be pressure for controls, probably on any merger worth more than \$1 billion.

On the environment, the egg scare will spill over into a more general concern about factory farming. Expect to see Government support for farmers to convert to organic farming, as in

Denmark, and a phasing out of battery egg farming over 10 years, as in Sweden.

Aluminium will be the year's environmental scare. This will be exacerbated by moves towards water privatization. Concern for tropical rain forests will continue, leading to a boycott of meat and iron from Brazil.

SOCIAL TRENDS

Robert Tyrrell, director, Henley Centre for Forecasting

The retail sector will have a hard landing. Britain is oversupplied, retail spending is down and companies need to spend on design and new costs, such as longer trading hours.

The 1992 debate may become polarized between countries such as Britain, which see integration as serving the consumer, and those such as France and West Germany, where it is a vehicle for industry.

The pound will remain strong, coming down with a bang in 1990, leading to a pre-election consumer spending spree, as in 1986-87.

An important demographic change: men usually date women three to five years than younger themselves. But from 1989, culminating in 1998, the number of women in the 18 to 23 age group will fall by 600,000 or 30 per cent. Older women may come into their own and there could be other profound social changes.

TRANSPORT

Stephen Joseph, executive director, Transport 2000; transport pressure group

Congestion in London and the south-east will continue to increase, keeping transport in the news. The Central London Rail Study will recommend building three or four new rail lines through London at a cost of £3 billion-£5 billion. The private sector may be approached for funding, but may not be convinced about profitability.

Road lobby will press for more roads, ignoring proof that car use expands to fill whatever space is made available for it. Interest in road use restraint measures (such as charging for the

use of roads) and in car-free cities in Europe.

Continuing speculation about the privatization of British Rail. The Government's decision on the Settle to Carlisle line will point the way.

POLITICS: THE LEFT

James Cornford, director, Institute for Policy Research, newly created leftist think-tank

Watch Scotland. The contradictions resulting from its lack of

true representation at Westminster will become more acute. It will be difficult to work out a scheme for devolution within the Westminster constitution.

Government privatization proposals will raise increasing doubts and difficulties.

Nato will be in some disarray as to how to deal with Gorbachov and arms reduction.

POLITICS: THE RIGHT

David Willetts, director of studies, Centre for Policy

Studies, original Thatcherite think-tank

The abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme is expected. It will free our big deep water ports to take advantage of the expansion of trade in the run-up to 1992.

There will be greater enterprise and experiment within the NHS, with managers buying more services from the private sector and the first experiments on individuals carrying their own private medical records on a credit card type fiche.

ECONOMICS

Mark Cliffe, chief economist, Nomura Research Institute (Europe); research arm of the world's largest (Japanese) investment bank

A 2.6 per cent growth, inflation rising to 7.5 per cent in the spring, falling to 5.2 per cent in the final quarter.

Current account deficit will fall slightly to £13.5 billion, but continue to be a problem. Expect the pound to be allowed to weaken in the second half to counter this.

Further investment in infrastructure as the catalyst for sustained growth. Moves to tackle increasing shortages of skilled labour.

FAMILY LIFE

Dr Michael Schlatter, director, Jubilee Centre, independent Cambridge-based Christian research group

Financial stress will become more acute in many families. This will result from higher interest rates, higher rail fares, higher inflation with no change in child benefit and, in Scotland, the new community charge.

More families will be in debt. More husbands and children will seek work away from home. It will become apparent that these external factors often contribute to marriage break-up and abuse of children.

The battle for Sundays will continue, but the Government will find it difficult to arrive at a formula which will satisfy Parliament.

CONSUMER TRENDS

Nigel French, chairman, Nigel French Enterprises; design and consumer forecasting consultants

With the population ageing, various companies have targeted older age groups, particularly the 25 to 40-year-olds. But the quality of their products has often been poor. More attention needs to be paid to design.

Clothes will diminish in unit sales, as more discerning customers buy better and expect their purchases to last longer.

Home furnishings will be important, particularly because demographic trends mean more people in their thirties with money to spend on their homes.

ASTROLOGY

Charles Harvey, president, the Astrological Association and chairman of Urania Trust; umbrella charity for British astrological bodies

Severe economic recession by the end of the year, after problems with US deficit in the spring. Moves to Fortress Europe and Fortress America. Unsettled period for the Soviet Union.

The 36 cycle of Saturn and Neptune centres on new impulses in Communist thinking. Resurgence of socialism, possibly in a new guise.

Astrological relationship between George Bush and the US means the new president will have to deal with an epidemic of terrorist attacks on US personnel and property.

Saturn-Neptune relationship points to both medical breakthroughs and increasing prevalence of epidemics.

Britain to face more sudden explosions, on the lines of Piper Alpha disaster. As we move closer to 1992-93, cycles of Uranus and Neptune suggest greater coming together of East and West.

CRYSTAL BALL

Old Moore's Almanac, publishing annually since 1697:

Tough negotiations between the Labour Party and trade unions in January. The Grand National in March may be won by a horse carrying 10st 10lb.

Major relaxation of apartheid and release of a black nationalist leader in June. Prison disruption in Britain in July.

Constitutional problems and lack of firm leadership in US towards latter part of the year.

Andrew Lycett



Post's twilight zone

A new dimension in space travel was opened up yesterday when it was announced that a post office is to be opened on the permanently-manned Russian space station, Mir.

Already the very landscape of outer space has been altered by the erection of lengthy mazes of red rope leading to and from the extra-terrestrial counters, nine out of 10 of which will remain permanently unmanned, in accordance with practice on Earth.

Future cosmonauts are already undergoing extensive training in specially simulated conditions designed to acquaint them with the hazards and pressures of the Post Office. Over a fortnight (the average length of time spent queuing for a stamp, according to scientists), these brave men are subjected to a severe battery of meaningless videos advertising incomprehensible services, sulkily clerks and strange old women talking gibberish. Many of them cannot take the pressure and elect to leave the course prematurely, transferring to the easier option of a year alone on Mars.

Once the Mir Post Office is in operation, it is expected that a permanent queue of up to 30 highly trained cosmonauts will be on 24-hour duty, thus ensuring that the novice who is simply after a stamp does not suffer from any experience of wait-lessness.

"We will be studying with very special interest the diffi-

culties and obstructions faced by cosmonauts while queuing in space," reports the director-general of the British Post Office, "and I feel sure we will do our level best to introduce most of them here."

Taking a well-earned break from his keep-fit activities on TV-am, Health Minister David Mellor last night declared open a new hospital designed to deal with patients suffering from EYQS (End of Year Quiz Syndrome).

This heavily under-funded unit treats those who, reading one End of Year Quiz too many over Christmas, experience a complete breakdown. For these poor creatures, every statement is merely one in a series of multiple choices, every answer simply the opening for yet more questions.

I asked one of the first patients when the problem had first been diagnosed. "Don't tell me! Don't tell me!" he replied. "Now, 'DI-agnosed - could that have something to do with Princess Di? No? Does Edwina Currie feature in it? Or David Hockney? Mmmm. Ask me another, I'll come back to that one."

EYQS is said to be highly infectious, so much so that many of the doctors and nurses operating in the unit



CRAIG BROWN

might be at serious risk. I asked Mr Mellor whether this might not constitute a major problem. "Major...major..." he replied. "Ah, got it! Major Ronald Am I right? Or, is 'constitute' the clue? Constitution! What affects the constitution? Edwina's eggs! Right?"

The senior surgeon reckons that up to 15 per cent of all newspaper readers might be smitten with the virus. Quizzes are everywhere at this time of year and it's very easy to pick them up. And then you begin to see everything as a light-hearted quiz of the year. "It's really pitiful," he explains, adding, "By the way, in answer to your next question, I'd say EITHER 'Not in my backyard' OR 'Eddie Edwards'."

"Late nights may impair the ability to come up with new ideas" is the dramatic conclusion to research carried out by something called the Sleep Research Laboratory at Loughborough University. This earth-shattering news came after 15 women and nine men had been asked: "How many uses can a cardboard box be put to?" The answers were assessed for "flexibility, originality, elaboration and fluency". Those who had missed a night's sleep achieved lower marks in all areas.

Perhaps it would save time and research if this column were to issue the results of next year's tests before the various laboratories have gone to all the fuss of attempting to prove them. I can exclusively reveal that:

(a) "Bigger shoes are worn by people with bigger feet." Research reveals that people with big feet who wear small shoes experience some degree of pain, while people with small feet who wear big shoes tend to fall over.

(b) "People who keep their eyes shut are liable to walk into lamp posts." Research reveals that people who forget to open their eyes at the beginning of the day are more accident-prone than others.

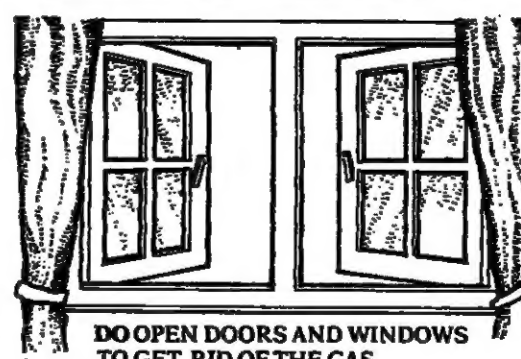
(c) "More food eaten when hungry." Research reveals that the average person tends to eat up to 50 per cent more food when hungry than when already full.

(d) "Most people feel hotter in summer months." Research reveals that most men, women and children feel hotter during the summer, and in particular when the sun is shining.

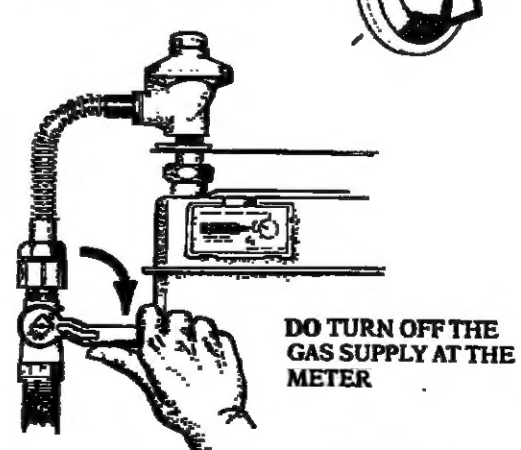
This column's New Year advice to readers is: when approached in the street and asked "How many uses can a cardboard box be put to?" - suggest that a cardboard box is best used as a repository for extensive research. The box should then be wrapped in a beautiful pink ribbon and used as an effective fire-lighter.

DO'S AND DON'TS THAT COULD HELP YOU SURVIVE A GAS LEAK

DO'S



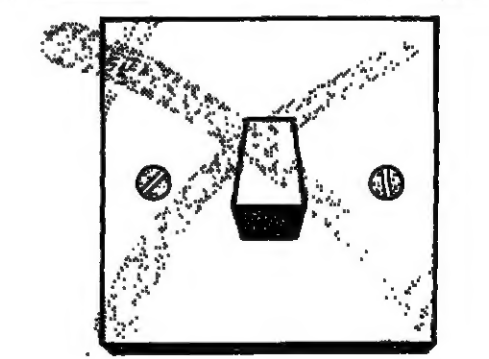
DO CHECK TO SEE IF THE GAS HAS BEEN LEFT ON UNLIT OR IF A PILOT LIGHT HAS GONE OUT



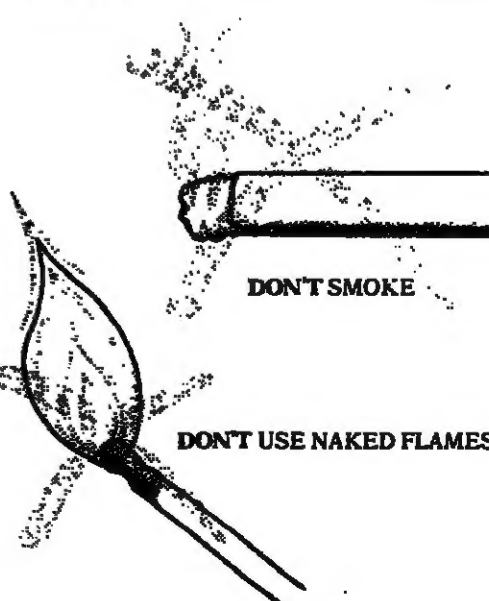
DO CALL THE GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE - WE'RE IN THE PHONE BOOK UNDER GAS, AND WE'RE ON CALL 24 HOURS A DAY EVERY DAY (MAKE SURE SOMEONE'S THERE WHEN WE ARRIVE!)

USE THIS SPACE TO NOTE DOWN YOUR GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE PHONE NUMBER - LOOK IT UP NOW!

DON'TS



DON'T SMOKE



DON'T LEAVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE - CALL THE EMERGENCY SERVICE.

British Gas

CUT THIS ADVERTISEMENT OUT AND KEEP IT SOMEWHERE HANDY. IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE.

ARTFILE QUIZ: ANSWERS TO YESTERDAY'S QUESTIONS

- Human heads and stuffed eagles.
- Scottish colourists: S.J. Poploe, whose record rose to £127,000 in April and then to £285,000 and £506,000, in quick succession, on December 10.
- Kirkleatham silver centrepiece by David Williams the younger. Bought for £750,000 by Temple Newsam House, near Leeds.
- Five Renaissance drawings from Chatsworth (including two Rembrandts; plus Pordenone and Veronese). Sold at Christie's in July 1987; granted export licences in January 1988.
- Hereford Cathedral. Mappa Mundi.
- Giambattista Tiepolo. He sold it for £1.5 million to "a financial institution abroad".
- President Marcos collection in January, due to his current disgrace; von Bulow sale, October, due to unsavoury connotation of two court cases concerning his now-comatose wife.
- Liberace, Andy Warhol, Elton John.
- Lord Carrington.

- Coinagli, New York.
- Sotheby's, due to loss of nerve after the stock market crash. May.
- John Martin's "The Assuaging of the Waters".
- David de Heem.
- Canaletto.
- Viennoise *fin de siècle*.
- Hammershol, Sager-Nelson, Anders Zorn, Bruno Liljefors, Carl Larsson.
- Jasper Johns. \$17 million (£8.4 million) for the painting, "False Start".
- Hogarth's "A House of Cards" and "A Children's Party".
- Santa Maria Novella.
- Jack Kooymen.
- Caspar David Friedrich's "Winter Landscape" at £1.5 million.
- David Bomberg.
- Eight Medieval Manuscripts from the Ludwig collection, because they had no illustrations and were therefore outside

- the scope of the collection. £2.5 million.
- Earl of Stradbroke.
- Giorgione.
- Garden sculptures from the Glasgow Garden Festival.
- Royal Holloway College.
- Mandaly Ruby.
- Michael Larionov.
- Paul Mellon.
- Miguel Canals.
- Clive Jenkins; Roy Jenkins.
- Bust by Rysbrack, which fetched £170,000.
- Oak and wrought iron sideboard by Gustav Stickley - a record for American arts and crafts furniture.
- "Editions Picasso" pots, jewellery, scarves.
- £71,500 for a Penny Black attached to a Mubsey envelope posted four days before it officially should have been.

SPECTRUM

The Times Review of 1988...

Gathering pace of perestroika in Thatcherland

Of immense holes carved far down through the London of Dickens, Pevsner, the Romans and the woolly rhinoceros, the London of the next century is rearing up in girders and concrete at frantic speed. The face of the capital has never been changing so fast. Threatened transformations, like those at Canary Wharf, King's Cross, Smithfield and Gray's Inn, dwarf those already in train. A whole idiom of architecture seems to have run from novelty to cliché in a matter of months, with its arch archaisms, miniature Crystal Palace appendages and candy-stripes.

In the streets around this frenzy of construction, the traffic flows slower and slower, with minor blockages repeatedly causing the entire city to lock solid for hours at a time. Public transport suffers from overcrowding, delays and occasional major tragedies like the Clapham Junction rail crash. Litter piles up in drifts, and patients dismissed from contracting mental hospitals pass the winter days begging pennies at the tube stations. Beside the exuberantly rising trophies of recovering prosperity, public services grow down-at-heel, subjected to the market forces of the queue and the traffic jam.

Today it is not so much the boyish faces of the police that make one feel one's age as the sight of demolition gangs tearing down buildings one remembers going up. With the royal populist instinct, the Prince of Wales has voiced widespread misgivings at the architectural aspects of the revolution.

Not surprisingly, the pace of change is exhilarating to some, disquieting to others. These civic perplexities seem to be mirrored in the country's present political mood. At a period when an administration is normally sojournally enduring its mid-term trough, polls show that the Government is more popular than it might expect to be: yet the reverse is true of most of its policies. Steadily falling unemployment, rising incomes, tax cuts and a balanced Budget (only the second in a generation) have turned yesterday's idea that "there is no alternative" into a cliché.

Labour's front bench may today be filled with highly capable Scots, but its policy response to the hurricane forces blowing through British politics continues to seem makeshift and half-formed. The highly visible Welshman who leads the listening party suffered a year of humiliations at the hands of Ron Todd, the voters of Govan and the airport security guards of Zimbabwe.

But even as the Tories ride high in the opinion polls, the policy skyscrapers with which they are so busily transforming the administrative landscape are viewed lukewarmly at best. Sewage plants and nuclear power stations are to be run for profit, and television franchises are to be auctioned to the highest bidder. The poll tax, the transfer of London education to a gaggle of extremist boroughs, and a host of other measures, have not yet revealed their effects in practice. The electorate seem to have decided that so long as Nigel Lawson does not fall in his handling of the economy they will take the rest of the package on trust. But what if the overheating of recent months proves less easily controlled than his supreme confidence insists?

One acute external observer cannot have failed to ponder this paradox of national mood sympathetically. Mikhail Gorbachev paid Mrs Thatcher a compliment, and implied one to himself, when he described Mrs Thatcher's reforms as a "perestroika", like his own. His revolution, too, contends with deep-seated forces for change. Polls have found only 16 per cent support for his programme, and it has enabled long-suppressed and potentially disruptive desires for personal and national autonomy to find a voice.

Even before Mr Gorbachev's momentous speech to the United Nations, it seemed to be touch and go whether he could accomplish such changes without creating a turbulence which would sweep him and his reforms away.

Almost at the very hour he mounted the rostrum, the Armenian earthquake brought the flimsy tenebrons of the Brezhnev era tumbling down, and mercilessly exposed the weaknesses of the system which had produced them. As many as 100,000 may have died.

A world-wide effort focused on Armenia, tending to switch attention from those other thousands of victims who had been left homeless in even poorer parts of the world by a year whose unnatural warmth had stirred up abnormally severe typhoons, floods and droughts.

The super-powers had already served an apprenticeship in co-operation under stress while the Iran-Iraq war was grinding to an end, after eight years and a million casualties. Of these, 290 were non-combatants aboard an airliner launched by Iran into a combat zone and shot down in error by the USS Vincennes. Thousands more were victims of nerve-gas and cyanide bombs with which the Iraqis bombed villages of their own people which had fallen into enemy hands. Since this was perhaps the first war in which chemical warfare had significantly helped a combatant to secure an acceptable result, the precedent was a disturbing one.

In another long-standing deadlock, that between Israelis and Palestinians, a chance, or

a mirage, of hope came into view. The PLO sent its lads out to martyr themselves all through the year, and the Israeli army zealously martyred them. When Yasser Arafat cashed in on the resulting international sympathy by declaring that he renounced terrorism and recognized the Israeli state, Israel appeared nonplussed.

Soon afterwards, a further 258 non-combatants in an airliner above Scotland were scattered into the winds at 30,000 feet, to fall in a deluge of steel and burning fuel onto the village of Lockerbie, where 11 others died. The disaster may have been an attempt to abort Arafat's initiative, or revenge for the Vincennes attack, or there may have been some other, more opaque motive. Significantly, in this year of peace moves, the world not only contained people who hastened to boast exultantly that they were responsible: there was competition to lay claim to the atrocity.

It was the second time in the year in which blazing oil had taken lives in Scotland. In July the Piper Alpha oil platform blew up and 166 men were burned or drowned.

In Ulster, it was more a year of murder than of peace-making. A train of bloody acts in Gibraltar, Belgium and London, as well as Ulster itself, reached its macabre climax in symmetrical murders, Protestant and Catholic, at two funerals. The IRA repeatedly succeeded in provoking the Government into shrill reactions of the kind that could be profitably turned to account in a Boston bar or a Dublin polling booth.

In reviews of past years, the Olympic Games have usually fallen conveniently into the category of international peace politics. It is a long time since the athletics has counted for more than the boycotts or the violence. For once, the Seoul Games were dominated by sport, though not always by sportsmanship. Ben Johnson ran the fastest 100 metres in history, but not entirely by his own efforts. After a referee's decision went against a Korean contestant, the world was scandalized by the spectacle of fighting breaking out in a boxing ring.

No such luck yet for Frank Bruno, waiting interminably for his date with the champ. Other sportsmen were afflicted with the same problem of finding someone to play with them. English football began to pay a price in quality for its isolation from the international game. English cricket, at a still lower point of demoralization, ran through four captains, and never got to India. Peter de Savary spent £3.5 million preparing for the America's Cup, and then wasn't invited. Sandy Lyle was the first Briton to win the US Masters; but our player of the year was undoubtedly Eddie Edwards, who rose to fame in the way the English love best, by coming last.

It was the year of a fish called Wanda and a rabbit called Roger. It was the year in which bad eggs upset 1,000 stomachs, and one junior minister. Compensation was quickly supplied, on three times the scale of Britain's aid to Armenia — though not to the victims, but to the egg-producers. It was the year both major parties toyed with electoral reform, and the Tories tried it out, on council tenants in Torquay. Robert Maxwell commissioned a biography of himself on homeopathic principles, as remedy for an acute attack of biographies. A few victims of the tabloid press received spectacular recompense through the courts, although the millions of victims deluded into mistaking the tabloids for a mirror of the actual world received none. The Turin Shroud was discovered to be a thirteenth-century, which was a disappointment. The Mappa Mundi was also thirteenth-century, but was discovered to be a very hot property indeed. In tune with the spirit of the time, the Dean of Hereford set about privatizing it forthwith. The unearthing of the long-sought Londinium amphitheatre represented an irritating temporary hitch to the rebuilders of London.

It was the year in which Dukakis and Bush competed to see who could frighten the American electorate least with hints about the stern measures that both knew would soon be necessary. Nelson Mandela was released but not freed, and Benazir Bhutto became a mother and a prime minister. Zola Budd was driven into retirement. Alexander Dubcek proved to be a great survivor; so did President Waldheim.

And it was the year of the trapped whales. For a substantial period, all other news fell into abeyance while we hung on the fate of three creatures trapped in the Arctic ice. They were not rare, and they certainly were not cuddlesome. But while a motley alliance of American scientists, Soviet icebreakers and baffled Eskimo whale-hunters struggled to rescue the wheezing monsters, none of us (except for Prince Philip) could think of anything else.

In the year in which some swords really were being beaten into ploughshares, those whales struck some chord, obscurely connected with ecological threat, the plight of the inarticulate, or superpower co-operation. However busy the terrorists and prophets of hate might be, it seemed just possible, as the Pershings and SS-20s blazed away in harmless firework displays in the desert, that for our unwieldy whale of a world, too, a channel might be opening up through the ice towards the open sea.

George Hill



From wimp to champ: George Bush, Republican, fought a wily American presidential campaign, changing his image and comfortably beating Michael Dukakis

JANUARY



Moved: Dr Marietta Higgs

At home, Jan 1: Government papers revealed that Harold Macmillan's government suppressed report about Windscale fire during which a radioactive cloud was released. 11: Government banned use of polyurethane foam in furniture. 27: Dr Marietta Higgs and Geoffrey Wyatt, paediatricians in Cleveland child abuse controversy, both moved to new jobs.

Abroad, Jan 11: Three Palestinians died during unrest on Gaza Strip.

Arts, entertainment, Jan 19: Christopher Nolan won £20,000 Whitbread prize for autobiography *Under the Eye of the Clock*.

Crime, Jan 12: Damages of £23,522 awarded to Mr and Mrs McSorley, driven from Windsor home after Hell's Angels moved in next door. 28: Court of Appeal rejected appeals by six Birmingham convicted of 1974 Birmingham pub bombings.

People, Jan 3: In office nine years, Mrs Thatcher became longest serving Prime Minister this century. 4: David Mellor, Foreign Office minister, described refugee camp in Israel as "a blot on the face of civilization". 10: Lord Whitelaw, Leader of House of Lords and Deputy Prime Minister, resigned after a stroke in December. Lord Belstead appointed new Leader.

Politics, 22: David Alton's Private Member's Bill reducing time limit on abortions passed by 45-vote majority. 24: Liberal Party voted to merge with SDP. 25: Ken Livingstone suspended from Commons for calling Attorney-General "a scoundrel to murder". 31: SDP conference voted to merge with Liberals.

Royals, Jan 23: Prince and Princess of Wales left England for Australian bicentenary. Science, medicine, health, Jan 13: Matthew Collier, four-year-old whose hole-in-the-heart operation had been postponed three times, underwent surgery at Birmingham Children's Hospital, but died month later.

Sport, Jan 22: Elton John decided against selling Waddell FC.

Weather, Jan 4: Britain hit by severe storms, rain and snow.

FEBRUARY

At home, Feb 2: Five female Gay Rights activists absented to Commons floor in protest over Clause 28. 5: Red noses seen everywhere as Comic Relief raised £5.75 million for famine relief.

Abroad, Feb 8: Mikhail Gorbachev announced he was willing to remove all Soviet troops from Afghanistan. 24: South African Government banned 17 anti-apartheid organizations from "carrying out or performing any activities or acts whatsoever".

Business, Feb 23: BP took over Glasgow-based Bntol, with assurances that no jobs would be lost. 24: Cecil

Parkinson announced plans to privatize CEEB in 1990.

Disasters, Feb 20: Torrential rain and floods made 10,000 homeless in Brazil.

People, Feb 15: President Kurt Waldheim told Austrians: "The belief in our Fatherland is at stake: You can trust me". 17: Neil Kinnock severely criticized Israeli occupying forces while on visit to West Bank. 21: American television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart admitted visiting prostitutes. 24: Survey in *Money* magazine revealed Britain had 20,000 millionaires.

Politics, Feb 4: Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education, announced abolition of Inner London Education Authority in 1990. 18: Mrs Thatcher announced shake-up of Civil Service.

Royals, Feb 11: Princess Royal elected to International Olympic Committee. 15: Prince Edward joined Really Useful Group.

Sport, Feb 13: Start of 15th Winter Olympic Games in Calgary.

Strikes, Feb 2: Seamen's strike disrupted British ferry services. 16: Dismissal notices sent to 228 striking technicians at TV-am. 21: Land-Rover's 6,000 manual workers strike over pay.

Weather, Feb 9: Eight people died as hurricane-force winds swept British Isles.



Survived: Kurt Waldheim

MARCH

At home, Mar 4: Nicholas Ridley, Environment Secretary, announced investigation into Westminster Council's cemetery sale. 6: Egyptian antiquities found at highlanders Castle by Lord Carnarvon.

Abroad, 16: Lt Col Oliver North and Admiral John Poindexter indicted over Iranagate. 20: Iraq accused by Iran of murdering 4,000 Kurds with mustard gas. 24: Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu sentenced to 18 years' jail for spying. 26: Senator Robert Dole dropped out of Republican presidential nomination race.

Business, Mar 17: Ford pulled out of plan to create 1,000 new jobs by investing £40 million in electronics factory in Dundee after unions could not agree single-union contract. 25: Government announced British Aerospace would take over Rover Cars. 30: Swedish Volvo

group bought Leyland Bus for £15 million.

Crime, Mar 2: Armed robbers stole more than £1 million from security van near Millwall Football Club. 6: Three IRA terrorists shot dead by security forces in Gibraltar. 14: Gun and grenade attack during funeral in Belfast of IRA terrorists shot in Gibraltar. Three people died and more than 50 injured. 19: Corporal David Howes and Corporal Derek Wood murdered by mob near IRA funeral in Belfast.

Politics, Mar 2: Liberals and Social Democrats voted to form new Liberal and Social Democratic Party. 15: Chancellor Nigel Lawson's Budget cut standard income tax rate by 2p, doubled tax on company cars. 23: Neil Kinnock condemned decision by Tony Benn and Eric Heffer to contest leadership and deputy leadership of Labour Party.

Royals, Mar 10: Prince of Wales narrowly escaped death when avalanche struck skiing party at Klosters, Switzerland. The Queen's former equerry, Major Hugh Lindsay, was killed.

Science, Mar 16: NASA warned that ozone layer was becoming dangerously depleted.

Sport, Mar 16: Zola Budd withdrew from British team after allegations of taking part in South African track event. 17: Richard Darvill won Cheltenham Gold Cup on Charter Party. 19: France beat Wales 10-9 and England beat Ireland 35-3 to share Five Nations Championships title. 23: Lloyd Honeyghan regained world welterweight boxing title when he knocked out Jorge Vaca of Mexico at Wembley.

Arts, entertainment, 12: British-made film *The Last Emperor* won nine Oscars including Best Picture. 28: Sir Geoffrey Howe tried unsuccessfully to prevent transmission of Thames Television's *Death on the Rock*.

Crime, Apr 12: Dessie O'Hare, the Border Fox, sentenced to 40 years in jail for kidnapping dentist John O'Grady. 25: John Demjanjuk, "Ivan the Terrible", sentenced to death in Israel after being found guilty of the deaths of thousands of Jews.

Disasters, Apr 4: Four British schoolboys on school trip in Austria fell to their deaths from Untersberg mountain. 30: Roof of Aloha flight in Hawaii ripped off in mid-air. Pilot landed plane.

People, 19: Ian Botham completed walk across Alps with elephants, having raised £3 million for leukaemia research.

Politics, Apr 18: Ron Brown, Labour MP, threw Commons mace to floor, causing £1,000 worth of damage.

Medicine, Apr 16: Surgeons at Birmingham revealed they had performed Britain's first brain call transplants.

Sport, Apr 2: Oxford beat Cambridge by more than five lengths in 134th Boat Race. 9: Brendan Powell won Grand National on Rhymer 'n' Reason. 10: Sandy Lyle won US Masters Open Golf Tournament.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

Disasters, June 27: More than 50 commuters died in train crash at Gare de Lyon at Paris.

People, June 6: Lester Piggott stripped of OBE.

Politics, June 14: Denzil Davies resigned as Labour Party spokesman for defence after Neil Kinnock's disavowal statement.

Sport, June 1: Ray Cochrane won Derby at Epsom on Kalyasi. 5: Sandy Lyle won Dunhill British Masters tournament at Woburn. 8: Mike Gatting dismissed as English cricket captain for bringing the game into disrepute by inviting a barmaid to his hotel room during First Test against West Indies.

Arts, entertainment, June 11: Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday concert at Wembley televised live by BBC, providing criticism from South African government. 23: Cannon UK announced sale of Eistree.

Business, June 23: Rowntree accepted a takeover bid of £2.5 billion from Nestlé group.

June 15: Six soldiers killed in Lismore when their van was blown up by an IRA bomb. 15: Peter Clowes arrested on charges connected with Barrow Clowes scandal which cost investors £190 million. 20: Body found of Mrs Marie Wilks, pregnant woman who disappeared when her car broke down on M50.

TIMES DIARY

SHERIDAN MORLEY

Did nobody at all have a noisy Christmas? I ask because "very quiet, just the family" is the only reply you ever seem to get these days to what is admittedly the most boring question in the world. Looking back over 47 Christmases I have thus far survived. I think on balance I do prefer the noisy ones. When my children were small, they shouted a lot and it was lovely; now, in their teens and older, they speak in a sort of resigned monotone, convinced they are dealing with a backward parent who has almost certainly bought them the wrong gift in the wrong colour and size, and will almost certainly have lost the bill with which to return it.

To avoid immediate present-altering discussions, I spent a few happy hours on Christmas morning doing the Brian Hayes show at LBC, to which the managing director thoughtfully brought a Buck's Fizz mixture of orange juice and champagne. As Buck's eldest grandson, I still wish he'd managed to patent the drink he invented sometime in World War One, as we could then all have retired on the proceeds, like the Pimm's family, with whom Sir Clement has been bickering here of late.

Back home, there was luckily still my father to shout at over the festive season: not in anger, you understand, but because due to a prolonged disagreement with his hearing-aid batteries it is often necessary to converse over a Berkshire television set which could probably be heard somewhere south of Paris.

The quietest Christmas I ever had was also the most unnerveing in Los Angeles about 25 years ago I was staying with an old exiled English actor and fish mimic called Richard Haydn, who took the view that the only escape from a synthetic sublimated California Yuletide was to spend the whole day in darkened cinemas. We managed to see a total of six movies, finishing up around midnight with Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*, whereupon I reminded him that it was Good Friday rather than Christmas Day that was supposed to be a time for penitence and suffering.

For the New Year, since I well know how enthralling such plans can be, having already fallen asleep while several people told me theirs, I am going to Suffolk to stay with Christopher Matthews in the hope of getting a free copy of his latest paperback. I am also going for the sea air, and a reminder of my school days spent a mile or two from his house at a place called Sizewell, which now sadly and not because of me has been turned from a preparatory school into a nuclear power plant.

The house where the school once was now overlooks a vast and sinister concrete growth on the beach, and the only consolation is that our old headmaster is no longer alive to see it. He was a Quaker pacifist from Holland who only ever taught his pupils French and English literature, on the grounds that all other school subjects were ultimately boring and unnecessary. Inscribed over the door of the dining room where he cooked wonderful Indonesian curries for the boys was the school motto: *if you don't succeed the first time, give up.*

Next week I have my two teenage daughters coming to stay in my one-bedroomed Baker Street flat, so I have already begun trying to make the sofa into a bed as per instructions, and to remember what, if anything, they actually eat. The plan seems to be mainly to go to the sales and return whatever I got them for Christmas, but they are open to other ideas so long as these do not involve actual playing. I still don't know how it is possible for a drama critic to have such and-theatrical daughters, but I am vaguely hoping to get them as far as the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden, which after its wonderful Gielgud exhibition has one devoted to the circus through the ages.

Sadly I suspect we shall not have to queue: whereas over Waterloo Bridge the Museum of the Moving Image, devoted to the cinema, has been the most brilliantly organised and publicised success story of 1988 in the performing arts, the Theatre Museum is after two years or more still shamefully unknown, unpublished and underfunded. Could we maybe have a New Year resolution from the Victoria & Albert, which runs the Theatre Museum, to stop treating it as some kind of secret cellar and get behind it with some intelligent advertising instead of all that Underground poster rubbish about their canteen?

BARRY FANTONI



It'll make no difference to Gerald. You can hear him boasting about the wig and pen!

We are getting along nicely with the Overheads, remarks made by audiences in theatres which I am hoping to collect into an anthology for Aids charities. Times readers have been an especially rich source of them since I first made the appeal in this diary back in the summer, and though I am still in need of many more I particularly like so far a lady hearing Macbeth start the speech "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" and saying, "so that'll be Monday then," and a man asking his wife during one of the pauses in *Waiting for Godot*, "Did you remember the fish?" I'm also very fond of the actor Michael Cashman coming on for a matinee to play the juvenile lead in *The Winslow Boy* at Scarborough and having to say, "Actually I'm 27," only to have an old man in the front row reply, "Never in your life, not even through a thick mist at Whitby." More please. And a Happy New Year to you too.

The search for the terrorists who blew up the Pan Am jumbo jet has inevitably turned to the Middle East. The prime suspects must lie among Palestinian extremist groups that met at a terrorists' summit in Libya in February, 1986. There, under the auspices of Colonel Gaddafi, they planned a campaign against Yasser Arafat's peace-seeking policies.

Among those present were George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the leaders of its various breakaway groups; Nayef Hawatmeh of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Abu Musa of the Fatah rebels and the other small groups that co-operate under the umbrella title of the Palestinian National Salvation Front; Issam al-Kadi of the Salqa "Storm" group; Abu Nidal; and Abu Ibrahim of the Arab Organization of May 15. All of these groups have the technical capability and the modes of operation that could link them with this latest mass murder. However, not all of them still oppose Arafat with the same intensity. Notably, Habash and Hawatmeh have been supporting Arafat's moderate diplomacy since 1987.

The most experienced practitioner of death in the air is Abu

Yossi Melman and Dan Raviv draw up a list of Pan Am suspects

The terrorists most likely

Ibrahim. His May 15 group (named after the independence day of the State of Israel, which he has sworn to destroy) consists of only 70 men. They have benefited from a special relationship with Iraqi intelligence. The regime in Baghdad has provided them with finance, false passports and other documents, explosives and training. The faction has also built up a secret network in several Arab countries, including Kuwait and Lebanon, and in Western Europe.

May 15's method is to send its members to marry Europeans, who are later used as agents. Experienced as a technical explosives expert, Abu Ibrahim specializes in sophisticated bombs, including pressure-sensitive devices linked to barometers that set off suitcase bombs after an airline's take-off. His bloody successes include the explosion aboard the cruise ship Orion in the harbour of Haifa, Israel, in December 1971.

His group tried, but failed, to destroy two El Al airliners in West Germany and Britain within two days in December 1983. Six months later, Abu Ibrahim's men sent a young West German on to an Israeli flight from Zurich with a bomb hidden in a suitcase. The El Al security guards discovered the device and prevented a disaster.

Abu Ibrahim's Iraqi support is less clear now. During the long war against Iran the Iraqis abandoned their radical path in order to improve their standing in the West, and kept him under strict controls. His group has not been linked with any major terrorist crime in the past four years. However, he has managed to regain some space for manoeuvre by befriending senior Syrians, and he may now have decided to resurface with a typical attack.

A high-powered Syrian delegation took part in the 1986 Libyan meeting, and the group responsible for the Pan Am bombing is

likely to have close links with Syria. Ahmed Jibril, the leader of the PFLP breakaway group, is a long-time Palestinian ally of Syria. He and the other member groups of the Palestinian National Salvation Front have denounced Arafat's decision to renounce terrorism, recognize Israel, and accept United Nations resolutions.

It would be difficult to believe that these groups would have carried out such a major international act of sabotage without at least the knowledge of Syrian intelligence. However, President Assad has been careful to avoid the "terrorist" label since his regime was associated with Nezar Hindawi's attempt to blow up an El Al jumbo jet by sending his girlfriend aboard with a bomb.

Abu Nidal is also certainly a candidate for suspicion. Over the past 15 years the so-called "Father of Struggle" has cleverly manoeuvred between various

Arab regimes to maintain his own freedom of action. He was a violent sub-contractor for Colonel Gaddafi in Libya, but also co-operated with pro-Iranian terrorists in Lebanon.

On the surface, the Pan Am attack seems to bear all his trademarks: cold-blooded targeting of civilians, the clever choice of timing to destroy delicate diplomacy, obvious professionalism in placing the bomb, and the organization that is needed to carry out such a deed in Western Europe.

On the other hand Abu Nidal has been noticeably silent during Arafat's recent diplomatic moves and even tried last year to be reconciled with the mainstream PLO.

Whoever turns out to have been responsible for the destruction of the Pan Am jet, there are some general lessons to be learnt. Too many Western governments, especially France, Greece and Italy, are still prepared to make secret deals with Arab

organizations to keep them out of their countries, while publicly supporting strong action against terrorists. Soft responses encourage terrorists to believe that they can act with impunity.

Western governments and aviation authorities still react too slowly to technical innovations that terrorists can make use of. The Austrian-made Glouck, a gun produced entirely from plastic and the Czech-made plastic explosive, Semtex, both need special detectors, which have not yet been introduced in airports.

Airlines have also been reluctant to follow the example of El Al and introduce thorough and successful security methods such as personal searches, armed sky marshals on every flight, and even metal reinforcement, which greatly strengthens the separation between passengers and the cargo hold, preventing catastrophic depressurization in the event of a mid-air explosion.

If the latest terrorist outrage produces improvement in any of these areas then the deaths of the 259 passengers on Flight 103 will perhaps have not been in vain.

Yossi Melman is author of a book about Abu Nidal, *The Master Terrorist*, and with the CBS News Correspondent, Dan Raviv, is working on a book about the Palestinian question.

Interview: Leon Brittan

For Queen and Continent

Leon Brittan had the right to expect by now to be serving, once again in Mrs Thatcher's Government.

When he left the Cabinet in the Westland affair the Prime Minister wrote: "I hope it will not be long before you return to high office to continue your ministerial career."

Instead, with no sign that the implied promise is about to be redeemed, Brittan has opted for Europe. He will tomorrow hand in his cards as an MP and on January 6 will take office as a vice-president of the European Commission and as commissioner responsible for competition policy and financial institutions.

But he makes it plain that he intends to return to British politics. He is horrified at the thought that anyone could imagine him becoming a bureaucrat. Only 47, and having been Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Home Secretary, he says: "I don't regard myself as departing from the political scene. My appetite for and interest in politics has not diminished by one jot."

He makes it plain also that he is going to Brussels not as Mrs Thatcher's representative but as Commissioner Brittan. With the Cabinet dismay that his predecessor, Lord Cockfield, apparently "went native" in Brussels, has the Prime Minister charged him with standing up for Britain?

"She naturally gave her views. There is no secret about them. But it was implicit on both sides that I go as an appointee, but as a wholly independent person."

Could Brittan imagine himself going native, coming to believe every problem requires a supranational answer? "It would be difficult to persuade me it should always be the larger body to take decisions. It is not even a case of saying that the more important decisions should be taken by the larger body."

He points out, for example, that nothing arouses stronger feelings than crime and punishment. But the United States, with a degree of unity that Europe is unlikely ever to enjoy,

manages perfectly happily with individual states running their own legal systems.

Brittan sees his own role in Europe as fighting protectionism, extending the free-market economic policies of the Thatcher Government on a European scale, and providing a level playing field on which European companies may contend for the prizes after 1992.

Does he, then, believe in greater economic and political union? He supports British entry into the European Monetary System. He is less convinced of the value of a European central bank and a common currency, saying that the difficulties of moving in that direction are apparent and that a lot can be done meanwhile by co-operation in building up use of the Ecu. As for greater economic and political union, he says that in general he holds to a simple principle, which he has already put to Commission colleagues and on which he has found more agreement than he had expected.

"What best can be done at local level should be done at local level. What can best be done at national level should be done there. We should only do at European level what can best, or only, be done at European level."

"It is a democracy and we should not be seeking power for its own sake in the Commission. We are seeking only to ensure that we have the powers needed for progress in a world of superpowers, and that they are used when needed."

Brittan is clearly sceptical of the claim by Jacques Delors, the Commission President, that within a few years the social decisions affecting EEC countries will be taken at Community level. "It was a personal prediction, not a statement of European policy."

In his one major speech on Europe since being named for the post last July, Brittan, an enthusiastic European since his early Bow Group days, echoed the Prime Minister in saying there could be no question of surrendering Britain's national identity. But he welcomed the



"further pooling of sovereignty" implied in Britain's passing of the Single European Act and talked of a need for the development of European institutions. Now he says: "I don't see any scope or need for further institutional change in the immediate future," saying that it is enough for now to digest the Single European Act.

"The debate now is not about mechanisms and direction but about the actual policies we should follow." But he also says that Britain has a particular role to play in scrutinizing the detail and implications of proposed regulations and directives, and

in securing further reforms of the common agricultural policy. And he does want some institutional change at home.

"We have not fully resolved the question of how Parliament looks at the detail of European proposals. The Commons scrutiny committee does a valiant job, but I don't think anybody could feel happy at the way European issues are handled in Parliament. I would guess that as the Single European Act is more fully implemented the demand for procedural changes in Parliament is likely to grow."

He adds: "Relations between Westminster and the European

Parliament are not satisfactory. If members of the European Parliament were given a warmer welcome at Westminster it would be to the benefit and advantage of the Westminster parliament as much as to Strasbourg." MPs, he says, would benefit from talking to people engaged full-time on European issues, but who share their general political philosophy.

Brittan has been preparing for his new post with characteristic thoroughness. There have been visits to Brussels to sort out his portfolio, staff and accommodation. There has been intensive reading and a brushing up of his

French. "The documents come in every language, but they come first in French." He has toured Whitehall talking to ministers whose departments may be affected by his work, and he has been lunched by almost every industrial group in Britain, "at this stage being only a sponge soaking up what they have to say."

As the Commissioner for Competition Policy he will be responsible for anti-trust legislation, mergers policy and the prevention of restrictive practices. He will also have to watch state aid to industry. "I will be trying to maintain a level playing field by making sure countries don't give unfair assistance to their industry at the expense of other countries" — the sort of issue that brought Britain before the Commission over the British Aerospace takeover of Rover.

That function will be important, says Brittan, in the run-up to 1992. "There will be the temptation for countries not doing so well to try to claw back some advantage by giving state assistance on the domestic level." Added to the competition portfolio, Brittan has responsibility for financial institutions: banking, insurance and the investment world. His task there, he says, is to create a genuine common market so that services can be traded as freely as manufactures. There is the gleam of a target in his eye as he says: "The insurance industry is only gradually being opened up. The German insurance market is famously restrictive."

Looking outwards, his chief European objective is equally clear. "The big questions are to do with relations with the outside world. Britain is less protectionist than some others. But it is tremendously important that the declarations of the outgoing Commission on preventing Europe becoming Fortress Europe are given reality. Of the tasks facing me the one of holding up that flag is one of the most important." This Brittan is no Little Englander.

Robin Oakley

Commentary • ROBERT KILROY-SILK

Labour's year of reckoning

Next year will not exactly be make or break for the Labour Party, but will not be far off it. The people's party will have to perform considerably better than it did in 1988 — and 1987, and 1986, and indeed, in any year since Neil Kinnock swept so effortlessly to its leadership — if it is to have the remotest chance of presenting itself as a credible Opposition, never mind alternative government, before the next general election.

The signs are not auspicious. In a year in which the Government has alienated large sections of the community — from nurses to poultry farmers, from students to mortgage payers — and in which it has introduced a whole raft of unpopular policies and seriously mismanaged the economy, it is amazing that the Labour Party is perceived to be politically irrelevant.

Heads ought to be rolling for that they would have done in any business that had such a dismal track record. But all is not lost, not yet. There is still time for a recovery to be staged, though a hot line to a miracle-maker would be useful. The party can still leave itself from the sidelines and back into serious politics.

It could begin by focusing on the major issues and sharpening its attack on the Government's policies. It needs to put the boot in more often.

In this past year the Labour Party should have been shouting the odds about the desperate plight of the homeless, the terrible difficulties of home-buyers, especially the young

first-timers. It should have mounted a strong and sustained attack on the mishandling of the economy, on high interest rates, the balance of trade deficit, the adverse OECD report, and all the rest. No government should ever have been able to recover from such an assault.

But it has not taken place. It is as if the Opposition took a year's leave. And the reason for its failure to go in for the kill goes to the heart of the problem. It is not because of the incompetence of its officers; though there has been a little of that, just as there has been on the Government's benches. Nor is it down to a shortage of combatants in the ranks. There are many on its benches who have the will and the ability to strike the Government where it hurts.

No, the problem is not so much shortcomings among the personnel but rather the party's lack of political identity. The troops cannot perform effectively because they no longer know what they are supposed to stand for. They do not know who they represent. They have no real sense of purpose or direction.

This lack of a clear policy and purpose explains why so many shadow spokesmen tend to direct their criticisms at the minister rather than at the issue. It explains why they are such constant prey to political opportunism and how, in their eagerness to exploit the controversies over the Ryan extradition and salmonella in eggs, they got themselves into a muddle and lined up on the wrong side. Only an incompetent, philosophically bankrupt

Labour Party could have allowed its health spokesman's glee at Edwina Currie's discomfiture to cause it to be aligned with egg producers against the interests of the consumer.

Nor is this the only area of muddle. There is also that of defence. And more than five years after Neil assumed the leadership the party is still without a clear policy on education, health or housing. Ask anyone who is a party member, even an activist: they do not know what their party stands for any more. And if they don't know, how can the rest of us be expected to?

Neil would say, quite fairly, that it is not reasonable to expect the Opposition to provide a detailed and finely tuned policy on every issue. But it should at least articulate a set of values, provide a sense of purpose, signal a direction. None of these exists, not one.

The party has, at Neil's insistence, publicly dumped its socialist philosophy, which provided a convenient ideological overcoat for its drive for power, but which it never sincerely believed in, and yet it has failed to pick up an alternative cloak.

The intellectual desert that has been created probably explains why so many of the party's more colourful, gaudy, intellectual supporters are firing with character, constitutional conventions, proportional representation and a Bill of Rights. While such notions and seminars, and the pamphlets to which they give rise, perform the useful function of occupying the cranks, the

poseurs, the political dilettantes, and the artists and academics who feel that they become serious people if they append their name to some political demand, they have no real political significance.

This kind of posturing is irrelevant to real people, as are parlour-game lists of names or the fancy new journal called *Samizdat*. The latter, let us be honest, is not exactly a name to cause excitement on the housing estates of Leeds and Bradford, not a talking point in Knowsley or in Sharn End, Birmingham. Its contents are not discussed across the beer and bingo tables in British Legion clubs, or at the allotment. Nor will they ever be.

So who are they addressing? Who are these people representing the Labour Party speaking to? Themselves, of course. And that epitomizes the real problem with the Labour Party. It has forgotten how to talk to real people.

DEC 30

ON THIS DAY

1895



The funeral of Sergius Stepiak (S.M. Kravchinsky), the Russian writer and nihilist, brought together a remarkable gathering that included William Morris, Keir Hardie, John Burns, and Karl Marx's daughter, Eleanor. Socialists mingled with nihilists and anarchists among the mourners. Tributes were paid in six languages.

Funeral of Stepiak

On Saturday afternoon the remains were cremated at Woking of Sergius Michaelovitch Stepiak, the well-known Russian author, who was accidentally killed by a passing train on the North and South Western Junction Railway at a crossing in Woodstock-road, Bedford-park, on Monday morning last. The funeral was the occasion of a remarkable manifestation of the esteem in which Stepiak was held by those who sympathized with his political views. The remains were conveyed from Stepiak's residence in Woodstock-road at noon to Waterloo Station which was reached at 1.40. Long before the arrival of the funeral procession, however, knots of people began to assemble in the station yard and persons carrying wreaths to be placed on the coffin became conspicuous. Among these wreaths one of red tulips and other red flowers attracted much attention. It bore a German inscription stating that it was sent in the name of the Communist Club, 49, Tottenham-court-road. Others bore the words "A death tribute from a Life friend — Herbert Burrows," "Russian Jewish Relief," "The Social Democratic Federation, in memory of Sergius Stepiak, by whose death our own freedom and international

patriotism have lost an earnest and zealous worker," and the names of various Socialist clubs. A band, playing the "Dead March" in *Sad* arrived upon the scene at 1.15. It was headed by a red flag draped in black, and was followed by a procession of men and women many of whom were in mourning. By degrees persons well known as advocates of "advanced" methods of social and political reform were observed among the collecting crowd. Mr Bernstein, formerly editor of the *Social Democrat* and on this occasion representing the Social Democratic party in Germany; Dr Aveling, representing the Legal Eight Hours and International League, the Bloomsbury Socialist Society, and the Gas Workers' and General Labourers Union; Mr William Morris, Mr Herbert Burrows and others arrived before the band, striking up a funeral dirge, announced the approach of the hearse and the funeral party. The hearse was an open one and the coffin was completely covered with wreaths of beautiful flowers the predominating colour being red. The mourning carriages followed, among the mourners being Mrs Stepiak, the widow. The crowd had now swelled to considerable proportions, and it was evident that it was largely constituted of foreigners of many nationalities. A meeting was held in the station yard, and Mr John Burns, MP, ascending a parapet, presided over the proceedings. Mrs Eleanor Marx Aveling (daughter of Karl Marx) said that the loss was not merely the loss to all men and women in their movement. It was also a personal loss of one whom they knew, honoured, and loved. She spoke there for the women, because Stepiak understood that there could be no emancipation for men except it went alongside of emancipation for women.



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone: 01-782 5000

PROTECTION PRIORITIES

The speed and certainty with which scientists have identified the cause of last week's air disaster over Scotland has given governments and airlines advantages on which they should swiftly capitalize. It has quickly dispelled the fear of structural failure, the impact of which on the industry would have been incalculable. It has freed them to concentrate on tracking down the terrorists while the trail is still warm and on strengthening air security.

Both tasks are more easily described than carried out. The threat of bombs on aircraft has grown since 1970 when the first was planted by Arab terrorists on a Swissair flight. In the last three years alone, there have been six serious incidents in which devices have either exploded or been detected in the baggage handling areas of airports or on aircraft in mid-flight.

Airport security is notoriously uneven, with a number of Third World countries (and some First World ones too) lacking either the will or the resources to maintain internationally agreed standards. Among the most disturbing characteristics of last week's atrocity was that it reflects weaknesses in the screening at either Frankfurt or Heathrow airports (or possibly both) which are reputed to be among the safest in the world. But the point is that however hard he is pressed, the terrorist who roams the world looking for loopholes, has plenty of choice.

Moreover, he now has technology on his side. Plastic explosives which are light and malleable (and thus easy to pack and conceal) have been available to terrorists groups for many years. But Semtex, developed for military use in Czechoslovakia, has the additional advantage of being odourless. It is therefore even immune to "sniffer" dogs.

The very name has become almost a generic term for plastic explosive, so freely has it become available to organizations like the IRA. While the detonator and wires attached to a Semtex bomb would technically show up on an X-ray scan, the advance of micro-technology and the efficiency of the explosive has made these increasingly difficult to detect. Yet the Czech Government has still not responded to an urgent request by this country to introduce trace elements into its manufacture, which would enable the security authorities to identify the origin of any "find." It has not yet been conclusively proved that Semtex was responsible in this case. But it illustrates the technical and political difficulties facing the authorities.

Technology may be coming up with some answers. Neutron Activation Analysis of one kind or another, which consists of bombarding a suitcase with a high energy beam of neutrons and observing the molecular reaction of what is inside, is still at an experimental stage, but has certainly some potential for the future. The US Federal Aviation Administration which commissioned the development of a Thermal Neutron Analysis prototype has reported a 95 per cent success rate during 12 months of trials.

The cost of a TNA machine could eventually be halved from its present \$1 million and the FAA says that it could process all the baggage

on a 747 in no more than half an hour. But that is for the future. Until such high-energy devices have been perfected and made readily available, airports are thrown back upon the present methods of X-ray machine, "sniffer" dogs and when appropriate, a manual search. As we have seen, the first two have been partly outdated and the third is a slow, labour-intensive operation.

Air travel has become an integral part of international commerce. If an airport like Heathrow were to introduce comprehensive baggage searches, it would cause momentous delays and loss of revenue. The conflict between convenience and danger has to be faced by both government and airlines. Passengers can choose not to fly if they believe that the records of airlines in general (or of any one in particular) are inadequate. But governments must offer their citizens protection against being murdered.

Multilateral action taken in parallel by governments is laborious to achieve but there is no substitute. The international bodies which concern themselves with air and airport safety may now have to consider imposing on their members minimum safety procedures which can be checked by external monitoring. Failure to meet minimum standards would then have to be punished by national air authorities by (ultimately) denying access to the national carriers of the offending country.

Nevertheless, those charged with evaluating threats, must determine priorities. The policy so far has been to concentrate security on priority targets. The Israeli airline El Al for instance searches every passenger, bag and baggage — and in consequence foiled a bomb plot 2½ years ago at Heathrow. All British Airways flights to and from Belfast are subjected to a very similar discipline.

To these priority targets must now be added the big American airlines. It follows too that all airlines flying to and from America should be more than usually alert and that warnings of any kind will have to be taken very seriously for a while. The confusion over the warning given before Flight 103 is regrettable; the authorities involved need to explain what will now be done to ensure that it is not repeated.

But more can also be done at other levels. Research needs to be intensified into the design and reinforcement of aircraft luggage holds and containers. El Al strengthened its cargo bays after the Swissair explosion of 1970. The effect this might have on containing at least some of the blast from a hidden bomb needs consideration.

Governments like those of Czechoslovakia and Libya (through which the IRA is said to procure its Semtex) should co-operate with the West in cutting the supply-lines to terrorists — or face sanctions which they will have cause to regret. Similarly, those countries which have played host to terrorist groups like Abu Nidal's or the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (which perpetrated the Swissair attack in 1970) should face the consequences of their benevolence.

OLD SHARES, NEW TAXES

Japan is a country in which the obvious takes forever and the difficult is achieved with bewildering speed. It ends 1988 still — and remarkably — in the 100-day shadow of the Emperor's last illness, but poised to launch itself with much more confidence than seemed likely, when he was first stricken in September, into the post-Showa era.

In the past week, it has taken two major steps. After endless brokering and hesitation, the Japanese Diet has finally passed a sweeping tax reform package. And the Prime Minister, Mr Noboru Takeshita, has reshuffled his cabinet in an effort to put the Recruit Cosmos share dealing scandal to rest.

It is perhaps too soon to be certain that the new Japanese Government will usher in, as the ageing new justice minister, Mr Takashi Hasegawa, has promised, reforms to create "a trustworthy political system". Within hours of Mr Hasegawa's appointment, his son revealed to Japanese reporters that Recruit had contributed to his father's political action committee. Few Japanese will have been surprised. Like the Lockheed scandal before it the Recruit Cosmos affair has tainted most prominent politicians in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and served to illuminate the endemic nature of influence peddling and gift-swapping in Japanese political and corporate life. While the Recruit scandal has obsessed the Japanese media and public, the weight of popular pressure which would be needed to stamp out ingrained traditions does not yet seem to be in sight.

While personalities are less important to Japan's consensus style of policy-making than they would be in Western cabinets, the average age of the new cabinet, even higher than that of the preceding one, does not exactly suggest a passion for innovation. Yet Mr Takeshita deserves credit for decision and nimbleness which were not obvious when he began his tenure. In brutal terms, he has bought tax reform — an aim which defeated several of his predecessors — at the price of his finance minister's resignation over the Recruit scandal. This can only be described as neat work.

Japan's high degree of political stability has, nonetheless, served it well. Its citizens'

incomes, measured in dollars, are higher than those of Americans, its economy shrugged off the yen's dramatic rise to grow at 6 per cent this year and its trade surplus is once again, somewhat embarrassingly for its foreign and finance ministers, rising.

The reshaping of its tax system is, in this context, probably more important in the long term than its cabinet reshuffle. It should help to expand the Japanese economy still faster, notably by boosting consumer demand and thus, in principle, providing opportunities for Japan's trading partners.

In scope the reforms follow the pattern set in recent years in countries such as Britain and the US, cutting income tax rates and reducing the number of tax brackets from 12 to five. Top rates of income tax will be reduced from 60 per cent to 50 per cent, and the lowest shaded down from 10.5 per cent to 10 per cent.

This still leaves top rates higher than in Britain, but the threshold at which they are payable is also much higher. The lowest rate, Mr Nigel Lawson should note, is well below our 25 per cent. Inheritance taxes have also been reduced.

Japanese are to be encouraged to spend this increase in their disposable income: another reform removed tax exemptions on the personal savings which are extremely high. But this will be partially offset by the tax reform which has been so controversial domestically that it has created long delays in getting the legislation through. This is the introduction of a sales tax, although at 3 per cent it will be considerably lower than Britain's 15 per cent VAT rate.

From Britain's standpoint, the most immediately significant change is the narrowing of tax differentials between imported spirits like Scotch whisky and spirits distilled in Japan. This is further welcome evidence of Japan's genuine commitment to opening its markets to imported products. But there is a long way to go, particularly in the field of services. Britain and other members of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations will be watching Japan's position in this year's trade talks closely.

Credit control

From Mr W. Grey

Sir, While warmly supporting Mr Paul Baran's suggestion (December 17) of "special deposits" by commercial banks (including building societies?) at the Bank of England as an additional (and variable) credit control, may I take it a step further and extend it to the international sphere?

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), as the best world central bank we have, will shortly

(next April) once again face the task of agreeing a further increase in its "quotas", or the contributions its member countries are required to make to its resources.

My suggestion is that, on this and similar future occasions, the quotas of countries running continually large surpluses on their current account balance of payments (and hence an excess of domestic saving over investment) be increased more than proportionately, with the IMF left to lend the additional funds as usual to

deficit countries in need with suitable strings attached.

Though surpluses and deficits aren't necessarily reprehensible, this would enable the IMF to "discipline" persistent debtors and creditors at one blow — something its architects, Keynes first and foremost, envisaged but failed to achieve.

Yours faithfully,
W. GREY,
12 Arden Road,
Finchley, N3,
December 17.

In the aftermath of Lockerbie

From Mr H. Glen

Sir, Saturday's front-page photograph (December 24), pinpointing the Sherwood Crescent crash site, probably changed a national tragedy into something of a personal one for many regular users of the A74.

We did not know the people who lived there, but their houses marked the end of a beautiful, but at times boring, stage of the trip south and it was always interesting to look for the changes they had made to their homes and gardens, similar to those we all make over the years.

We did not know them, but can identify with them, their relatives and neighbours, to whom we send our deepest sympathy.

Yours faithfully,
H. GLEN,
Moidart, Ermyn Way,
Leatherhead, Surrey,
December 28.

From Mr Paul S. Hapworth

Sir, Through the sadness of the recent 747 air disaster there comes to me the feeling that the black box (aircraft flight data recorder) appears to have been designed for different times and is now unable to give those essential last split-second clues for the sort of accidents for which it is most needed. If its monitoring function is dependent on the integrity of the aircraft's power supply, it will have severe limitations in catastrophic failure.

Can we not design a new or modified data recorder which is able to switch to its own energy supply and so monitor things like decompression in cabins and baggage holds and have its own sudden-movement detectors to give, say, 10 seconds of extra data in the event of catastrophe?

Yours faithfully,
PAUL S. HAPWORTH (partner),
Paul Hapworth Design Associates,
Stonegate,
Warwick Bench Lane,
Guildford, Surrey,
December 28.

From Mr G. J. Maplebeck

Sir, Mr Robinson's letter (December 28) [about warning people checking in for a flight] makes no mention of aircrew.

Are they to be denied the choice offered to passengers? If not, what happens (apart from a journalistic feast) should they opt out?

Yours faithfully,
G. J. MAPLEBECK,
35 Orchard Avenue,
Chichester, West Sussex,
December 29.

First steps first

From Mrs S. McKenzie-Hill

Sir, The Government claims that some 80 per cent of three to four-year-olds have some sort of pre-school education. However, the other 20 per cent are the children who need it most. They come from low-income families who cannot afford private nursery schools, but they are not "at risk" or needy enough to be given a local-authority place.

Playgroups may also be unsuitable as, although they cost very little, they are not free and they can be very off-putting to some mothers, who may have to be involved in helping to run them.

Research has shown that middle-class mothers take most advantage of pre-school education, while emphasizing the importance of nursery education for the most disadvantaged.

The Government could help low-income families by giving them a voucher, or an addition to family credit or child benefit, which could be spent on education only, in one of the many excellent private nursery schools, all of which have to be vetted by social services departments.

The vouchers would be cheaper than local-authority provision, since there would be no capital costs, and administration costs and overheads would be lower. This Government is doing much to raise standards in schools, but it has neglected them at the outset.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHANIE MCKENZIE-HILL,
Old Middleton, Westmoreland,
Lewes, East Sussex.

Compensation awards

From Mr Stephen Zollner

Sir, The letter from Professor Taylor (December 28) concerning compensation for victims of medical negligence contains a number of implications that are wrong.

First, it seems to imply that recent increased awards are in some way attributable to growing generosity towards victims by judges. Judges are acting according to fairly settled principles of law. If there is growth in the size of awards it is because the costs of compensation, including future medical and nursing care which may be necessary, have increased. There has been no dramatic change in the method of assessment. In major awards, e.g., for those tragic cases of maximum severity such as quadriplegia, by far the largest proportion of the damages awarded is for such items as loss of earnings, future care, cost of special equipment.

Second, he seems to imply that doctors are a special case. In fact, all persons who negligently cause injury to another have their cases dealt with in the same way, whether they be motorists, or whosoever.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (01)782 5046.

Challenge on junior doctors' hours

From Dr M. J. Barnard and others

Sir, David Mellor (report, December 29) apparently believes that many stories concerning doctors collapsing and making mistakes through sheer exhaustion are mere "fishermen's tales". Furthermore, he has pointed out that doctors are not actually physically working during their full period of on-call duty. We were saddened that someone who holds major responsibility for health service matters should demonstrate such a complete lack of understanding of this very real threat to patients' safety.

One of us is timetable for 132 hours of duty this week (out of a possible total of 168 hours). This is a normal part of the duty roster, with no special or unusual circumstances. He will be directly responsible for most of the general anaesthetics in this hospital for the whole of the Bank holiday week-end.

As Mr Mellor must be aware, anaesthetics is often likened to flying aeroplanes, yet pilots are strictly limited in the number of consecutive hours they are allowed to fly. Mistakes in both professions are simply catastrophic. Would Mr Mellor like to be anaesthetised by this person on Sunday night?

Others of us will be solely responsible for the admission of all general medical patients and their subsequent care in hospital. By the end of the weekend they will be looking after critically ill patients, having been on duty for 80 consecutive hours. They will then have to perform their normal nine-to-five duties on every following weekday. Would Mr Mellor like to be admitted to hospital with a heart attack by one of these doctors on Sunday night?

We would like to extend an open invitation through your column, to Mr Mellor to join us this weekend for our on-call duties. Perhaps he would benefit from experiencing, at first hand, the reality of the dangers posed to patients by tired junior doctors working excessive hours. If he cannot, for any reason, attend this weekend, our invitation extends to any subsequent weekend.

Yours sincerely,
M. J. BARNARD, M. TAYLOR,
S. DESAI, L. HOWARD,
I. FOC, J. MCKINLAY,
Whittington Hospital,
Highgate, N19,
December 29.

From Dr A. P. L. Goodwin

Sir, As a junior hospital doctor, I can only commend Drs Everington and Low (report and photograph, December 27) for their sterling efforts to highlight the plight of the exhausted juniors working in Great Britain's National Health Service.

One point that really has not been highlighted is the fact that junior hospital doctors are paid one third of their hourly rate for

every hour after a "40-hour week". Obviously, it is cheaper for the NHS to employ one doctor for 100 hours (or more) under the present pay scale than two doctors for 40 hours each, plus overtime at a sensible rate of pay. Therefore, when doctors' overtime rates are brought into line with every other form of employment, the NHS would find it financially prohibitive to employ doctors for such excessive hours.

Criticism of consultants and the "I did it in my day" mentality are extremely broad generalisations. I would like to point out that, for example, at Addenbrooke's Hospital, in the acute specialty of anaesthesia and intensive care, the danger to patients from over-tired doctors has been recognized; measures have been implemented to safeguard the patient and, indeed, the doctor, by limiting the number of hours worked continuously and ensuring that nobody is left to work alone after a heavy night on call.

A patient's safety and care must always come first; and in the medico-legal climate in which doctors now practise, tiredness is no defence and the employing authority should now take responsibility for placing their employees in such a situation.

Yours faithfully,
A. P. L. GOODWIN,
The Retreat, Barkway,
Royston, Hertfordshire.

From Dr M. S. Hall

Sir, Whilst I have very great sympathy with the stress upon junior hospital doctors who work long hours, often with disturbed nights, and still have to do an efficient, safe, and full working day, this problem is not limited to this group of doctors. General practitioners are in a very similar position.

In many city areas there are deputising services which can take the load off the GP's out-of-hours commitment, but for most of the country medical care is provided by the patient's own GP or that GP's partners. Family-practitioner committee statistics show that the number of out-of-hours calls made by GPs between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. (they do not record visits within "normal working hours", i.e., 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.) is steadily increasing.

"Burn-out" is a term increasingly applied to stressed individuals who find they have to take early retirement or at least reduce their work commitment. It is perhaps not surprising that many general practitioners, as they reach middle age, find that the burden of providing emergency out-of-hours cover, combined with the need to provide a high-quality, daytime service, is becoming impossible to bear.

I am, Sir, yours sincerely,
MICHAEL S. HALL,
Beech House, Shebbear, Devon.

Cancer research

From the Director General of the Cancer Research Campaign

Sir, Mr Hurst (December 24) asked which of the cancer charities he and his family should support and suggested a merger. Only a handful of cancer charities can reasonably claim to operate on a national scale, and they divide into those concerned with research and those mainly concerned with the care of cancer patients.

Bigger is not necessarily more economical. There are important differences between the major research charities: thus, our organization has traditionally supported research at universities, hospitals, and medical schools, covering prevention and understanding the nature of the disease, diagnosis, and treatment. The Imperial Cancer Research Fund prefers to employ its own researchers in its own laboratories.

Research in the UK is co-ordinated through the Coordinating Committee for Cancer Research. This and other less formal links between doctors and scientists ensure that research is not needlessly duplicated.

Yours faithfully,
D. de PEYER,
Director General,
Cancer Research Campaign,
2 Carlton House Terrace, SW1,
December 28.

Third, he seems to suggest that the main purpose of awards is for "society to manifest its concern." I doubt that this is the sole rationale for existence of the law of negligence. Is not the truth that the doctors have for a long time enjoyed overly cheap insurance?

In so far as "society" pays for doctors' remuneration, then, if their premiums rise, the burden will eventually be passed on to us all. In other words, the "limited pool of money to be applied to health care" of which he speaks is not truly limited.

When he mentions the contrast in position between successful plaintiffs and "those whose natural disasters allow of no natural claim" he may have a point. But it is not fair to blame the judges.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN ZOLLNER,
15 Old Square,
Lincoln's Inn, WC2,
December 28.

From Mr D. S. Macpherson

Sir, Your report (December 22) of the award of record damages to a brain-damaged patient and the judge's criticism of the health authorities highlight a continuing and well-recognized deficiency in the care of these patients. Many are unable to press for damages if their accident did not involve either negligence or criminal in-

French bicentenary

From Sir John Stokes, MP for Halesowen and Stourbridge (Conservative)

Sir, I very much hope that the celebrations in France in 1989 to commemorate 200 years since the start of the Revolution will not be supported by anyone from England — neither the Royal Family, nor any member of the Government.

The Revolution was responsible for the brutal deaths of thousands of innocent people and was followed by the military despotism of Napoleon, which cost us and our allies over 20 years of war, with great loss of blood and treasure. The violence of the Revolution also put back the cause of parliamentary reform in England by more than 40 years.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN STOKES,
House of Commons,
December 28.

Sounds horrible

From Mr Leonard W. Bull

Sir, My most heard and hated voice of the year says: "This is a recorded announcement. Thank you for calling Directory Enquiries. You are held in a queue and will be answered shortly."

Yours faithfully,
LEONARD W. BULL,
43 Morray Gardens,
Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex.

Easing the trial of jail visits

From the High Sheriff of Lancashire

Sir, Mr Kilroy-Silk ("Punishment in duplicate", December 23) touches a nerve when he draws our attention to those families visiting prisoners in our jails who have to queue outside until visiting time.

When they do at last get in they will find that in the older prisons the conditions are hardly conducive to social intercourse, and what do they do with the children?

In the new prison, Garth, near Leyland, the senior probation officer and the prison governor have begged a redundant building from the contractor and hope to get the community service to decorate it. They will have to furnish it to provide a play area for children, somewhere to wait before visiting time, where there are counselling facilities for those with the problems that arise when the principal wage earner is removed and, indeed, where they can get a hot drink after a long journey.

The money, when raised, will provide the "adequate facilities" that Robert Kilroy-Silk knows are important.

Yours faithfully,
J. F. GREENHOUGH,
9 Willows Avenue,
Lytham, Lancashire,
December 28.

From Lady Mosley

Sir, Your correspondent, the General Secretary of the Association of Chief Officers of Probation, writes (December 21): "It is bad enough to send anyone to prison: it is necessarily better to make his home a prison..."

The answer is, yes. If prison is hell, and it is, house arrest, by comparison, is heaven. Of a total of five years I spent three and a half in gaol and one and a half under house arrest. I therefore know both, all too well.

Yours faithfully,
DIANA MOSLEY,
Temple De La Gloire,
91400 Orsay,
France,
December 23.

Prints to preserve

From the Editor of Print Quarterly

Sir, Now that the Commons Public Accounts Committee is suggesting that national museums should sell their "lesser" paintings in order to maintain the rest of their collections, or enrich them with new acquisitions (report, December 15), the idea that the British Museum should sell some of its duplicate prints has been mentioned in various quarters.

Real duplicates — that is, impressions taken from the same matrix at the same time and on the same type of paper, are very rare amongst Old Master prints, and even the British Museum has just a few such examples. What are commonly termed "duplicates" are different impressions of the same print, sometime printed hundreds of years and thousands of miles apart.

They often represent the only available evidence of the history of the matrix, and therefore of the influence of a particular image on taste through the centuries. The history of printing houses, of the consequences of changes of political or religious events in the life of the population, of the appearance and disappearance of fashions.

At some point during their history most great print rooms in the world have, for contingent reasons, sold some of these "duplicates": this is precisely why every serious scholar who is about to start work on Old Master prints comes to the British Museum first. Its collection, because it includes so many duplicates, is the richest and most important in the world and constitutes an undisputed focus for research in this field of art history. It is a duty of the nation to make sure that it is given all the financial support it needs to maintain this enviable position.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LANDAU (Editor,
Print Quarterly),
80 Carlton Hill, NW8.

New tests for old

From Mr P. M. H. Jester

Sir, I read with dismay (report, December 19, early editions) of the trials being carried out secretly at selected primary schools as part of the phased introduction of the new national curriculum. The good intentions to return to the three Rs to restore literacy and numeracy to a generation encouraged by "modern" educationists to use calculators before any basic foundations have been laid appear to have been hijacked in favour of discovering how many handspans are equivalent to the length of a desk.

Of course this is developmental play for a seven-year-old, but if that child has no idea what three times three is, do we have our priorities in the wrong order?

Yours faithfully,
P. M. H. JESTER,
Arley House, Duck Street,
Wendens Ambo, Essex

Too early bird

From Lieutenant-Colonel John Wood (ret'd)

Sir, Perhaps due to this extraordinary warm weather, the first powered hang-glider was seen here today, flying north.

Yours etc.,
JOHN WOOD,
Coombe Down, Bournemouth, Dorset,
December 27.

COURT
AND
SOCIALSOCIAL
NEWS

The Princess of Wales, as patron, will attend a performance of *Falstaff* by the Welsh National Opera at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York on February 2.

Princess Alexandra will open the Florence Nightingale Museum on the site of St Thomas's Hospital on February 4.

The Princess Royal, as President of the British Clothing and Clothing Export Council, will visit the SEHM Menswear exhibition, Porte de Versailles, Paris on February 6.

Sir George
Meyrick

A memorial service will be held for Lieutenant Colonel Sir George Meyrick, MC, at St Mark's Church, Highcliff, at 11.30 am on Monday, January 16.

Bid to save
sea birds

A rescue operation has been launched to save hundreds of sea birds affected by a big oil slick 20 miles off the Essex coast.

Naturalists fear the spillage could damage colonies of rare birds such as guillemots and red-throated divers. Coastguards say the seven-mile long slick could have come from a tanker illegally cleaning out its tanks at sea. Samples have been taken for analysis in a bid to trace the source.

Dozens of seagulls have already been washed up barely alive on beaches at Clacton and Walton. Nature Conservancy Council warden Reg Arthur said: "The birds look as if they have been dipped in black butter."

Forthcoming
marriages

Mr R.C.H. Baker and Miss T.S.B. Parker
The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of the late Field Marshal Sir Geoffrey Baker and of Lady Baker, of Pond House, Wadhurst, East Sussex, and the daughter of Mr and Mrs Allen Parker, of The Wadhurst, Bewdley, Worcestershire.

Mr D.M.J. Mostyn and Miss J.C. Rhodes
The engagement is announced between Mark Joseph, son of General Sir David and Lady Mostyn, of Lyme Regis, Dorset, and Jane Carolyn, daughter of Mr J.W. Rhodes, of Melbourne, Australia, and Mrs M.B. Rhodes, of Walton-on-Trent, Derbyshire.

Mr J.C. Beglin and Miss S.K. Quilter
The engagement is announced between Jeremy Charles, younger son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Beglin, of Amerham, Buckinghamshire, and Samantha Kate, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman Quilter, of Terrier, Buckinghamshire.

Mr A.D. Bungard and Miss M.A.J. Crichlow
The engagement is announced between Andrew, only son of Mr and Mrs G.D. Bungard, of Hathersage, Derbyshire, and Mary, only daughter of the late Dr T.V.L. Crichlow and Mrs Joan Crichlow, of Wimpole Street, London.

Mr J. Cheswright and Miss R.E. Whitehead
The engagement is announced between James, elder son of Mr and Mrs A.J. Cheswright, of Great Baddow, Essex, and Rosalyn Elizabeth, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Neville Whitehead, of Cultra, Co Down.

Mr N.S.T. Cheney and Miss J.H. Woodbury
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Ivor Cheney, of Little Venice, London, and Jane, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Terence Woodbury, of Lonsdale, London, Buckinghamshire.

Mr J.C. Chick and Miss T.H. Thuy Duong
The engagement is announced between John Charles Chick, of Towcester, Northamptonshire, and Tran Thi Thuy Duong, Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Mr R.J. de M. Mitchell and Miss S.M. Mitchell
The engagement is announced between Robert, son of Squadron Leader and Mrs J.W. Mitchell, of Haresfield, Gloucestershire, and Susie, daughter of Mr and Mrs A.R. Mitchell, of Cleve St Margaret, Shropshire.

Birthdays today

Mr A.M. Allen, former chairman, UKAEA, 64; Mr Gordon Banks, footballer, 51; Professor Sir Roy Calne, surgeon, 58; Mr Anthony Cripps, QC, 75; General Sir David Fraser, 68; Sir Reginald Groom, chartered accountant, 82; Lord Harrington, 81; Professor J.T. Houghton, director-general, Meteorological Office, 57; Lord Howick of Glendale, 51; Air Chief Marshal Sir Edmund Huddleston, 80; Professor Dame Rosalinde Hurley, microbiologist, 59; the Right Rev Peter Nott, Bishop of Norwich, 55; Sir John Pridaux, banker, 77; Sir Albert Robinson, company director, 73; the Duke of Somerset, 36; Lord Terrington, 73; Sir Eric Weiss, former deputy president, United World College, 80; Sir David Willcocks, former director, Royal College of Music, 69; Mr Clifford Williams, theatrical director, 62.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Rudyard Kipling, 1865; Stephen Leacock, humorous writer and economist, 1869. DEATHS: Robert Boyle, chemist and physicist, 1691; Sir William White Baker, explorer in Africa, 1893; Amelia Bloomer, campaigner for women's rights, 1894; Romain Rolland, novelist and biographer, Nobel laureate 1915, 1944; Alfred North Whitehead, philosopher and mathematician, 1947; Trygve Lie, first secretary-general of the UN 1946-52, 1968.

Bishop's funeral

The funeral of the Right Rev Francis Thomas, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Northampton, who died on Christmas Day at the age of 58, is to be held at Great Billing, Northamptonshire, on Wednesday.

Farm land prices leap by
a quarter in sellers' market

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Despite a continuing fall in farm incomes, land prices in many areas are climbing back to levels not seen since the boom years of the late 1970s.

In the first six months of this year, average land values increased by more than 23 per cent in England and by 12 per cent in Wales, according to Mr John Kaye, General Manager of the Agricultural Mortgage Corporation.

The paradox is explained by the growing number of people who have sold land for residential or industrial development, and are seeking to reinvest the profits in properties with a high amenity value, particularly if they include attractive farmhouses.

In many parts of Britain top quality commercial farms have fetched prices well over £2,500 an acre, and in some cases as much as £4,000. The high prices also reflect a sellers' market; the annual turnover in England and Wales, at little more than 300,000 acres, is the lowest for 10 years.

In contrast, ordinary working farms, with no great amenity value and with no desirable buildings attached can still be difficult to sell. Mr Charles Clark, head of Black Horse

Agencies agricultural division, said that the ever-increasing demand for the few farms on offer in south-east England had resulted in prices far exceeding expectations.

Much of the demand was from non-farming buyers who saw land ownership as an attractive investment, which also provided them with the sort of rural lifestyle they were seeking.

The type of farm sought by this new breed of buyer rarely had anything to do with agricultural productivity or inherent soil quality. The most important factors were the size and attractiveness of the farmhouse, together with sporting, recreational and amenity facilities.

A good example was Owsley Farm, near Crowborough, East Sussex, comprising 245 acres of mainly Grade 4 land, which was recently sold to a non-farmer for the guide price of £550,000. The vendor, a working farmer who had acquired it only three years earlier after moving from Cambridgeshire in search of cheaper land, made a handsome profit and was able to return to East Anglia where he bought a large block of Grade 2 land for less than it would have cost three years ago.

Becket's murder remembered

ADRIAN BROOKS



The Dean of Canterbury, the Very Rev John Simpson, preparing the Altar of the Sword Point, set on the steps within the cathedral where Thomas Becket was murdered on December 29, 1170. The anniversary was marked yesterday with a service and procession.

Nature society to become the
champion for the otter

By Gareth Hux Davies

The otter, one of Britain's best loved rare creatures, acquires a new champion in 1989. The Royal Society for Nature Conservation is launching on January 1 a national programme aimed at protecting and expanding the creature's habitat and re-introducing it into the wild.

The Otters and Rivers Project is the most ambitious attempt to rescue and restore the otter since it went into steep decline in the 1950s and 1960s under the combined assault of water pollution, agricultural change and clinical river bank management.

Outside Scotland, where it survives in relatively healthy numbers, the otter is restricted to the south-west and east of England, parts of Wales and a few other isolated locations. The RSNCC, Britain's largest nature conservation group, with 48 associated county and urban trusts and 1,800 nature reserves, is taking over and expanding the successful otter haven project begun in 1983 by the Vincent Wildlife Trust, a small charitable group devoted to wildlife projects.

A team of five regional officers and a national co-ordinator employed by the society will explain the otter's specific habitat requirements to land owners and statutory bodies who control suitable river bank territory. Otters need regular clumps of river bank trees or vegetation in which to rest and breed, like beads in a necklace, rather than continuous cover, spaced out in a linear river territory which may be as long as 25 miles for a mature male. The team will advise land owners how to manage their land and rivers so that the beads of cover are set sufficiently close together, by cutting existing habitat and planting new cover.

The project's second objective will be to build on the Vincent Trust's successful programme of other introductions into the wild. The RSNCC team will identify the best sites for re-introductions, using animals raised by the Otter Trust at Bungay in Suffolk. However, this strategy will be used sparingly, because re-introductions made in areas

cut off from existing populations are considered unlikely to succeed.

The RSNCC team will also liaise with and advise water authorities, local authorities, government departments and statutory and voluntary bodies on how to look after and promote the otter.

The project will be supported for one year by the Vincent Trust. The RSNCC is seeking backing for a further three years beyond next December.

"The otter is a very exciting mammal and the most important species in our work on the river habitat," said Tim Sands, head of conservation for the RSNCC. "It is also a key indicator to the health of our rivers."

"We are going into a year when water privatisation will be at the top of the agenda. What is happening to the otter will be a useful indication of whether the new water companies and the proposed National Rivers Authority are doing their job properly."

OBITUARIES

SIR IEUAN MADDOCK

Getting industry to exploit fruits of science

Sir Ieuan Maddock, CB, OBE, FRS, who was Chief Scientist to the Department of Trade and Industry, and later to the Department of Industry, from 1971 to 1977, and who was afterwards President of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, died yesterday at the age of 71.

Ieuan Maddock contributed perhaps more than any other scientist and engineer in putting into practice the idea of technology transfer where by industry could exploit more effectively the fruits of research. As the controller of industrial technology, at the Ministry of Technology, twenty years ago, and then chief scientist to the Department of Trade and Industry, until 1977, he guided and reshaped the government's huge research and development establishments in the difficult time when spending on science and technology was under attack.

Long before the economics of Thatcherism were brought to bear on expenditure on science, Maddock had introduced, in 1972, a system of payments under which industry was charged the proper rate for the job for the research done in his department's laboratories.

Although he spent most of his career in the scientific civil service, Ieuan Maddock was frequently at odds with his political masters and a constant critic of the inefficiencies of industry in the management of technological change, particularly the large defence contractors.

His early work was in the field of atomic warfare research, and he was head of field experiments for the early British bomb tests in the 1950s, which meant that his finger was literally on the button.

He referred to that period years later, when receiving an honorary degree of Salford University, in 1980, with an anecdote that few could have chosen to prick the arrogance of a government minister to such effect. When a new minister arrived in the 1970 government, he lined up his



civil servants and declared: "By the time I was 36 I had made half a million pounds. What had any of you done?"

Sir Ieuan replied, "I don't know about half a million pounds, but I had let off five atoms bombs."

His technical expertise was displayed much earlier, at the British Association's annual meeting, at Norwich in 1961, when he explained the physics of the detection of nuclear explosions in space and underground.

Maddock went on to foster greater public understanding of science when he became a secretary to the British Association, after his retirement from Whitehall.

His career took him from Gower Grammar School, in Glamorgan, and the University of Wales, Swansea, via the work on defence, and then industry, to be Principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1979, where he stayed three years.

While promoting the

application of science and technology, he was aware of the repercussions of its improper use long before the environmental movement took root.

He warned of growing public opposition to the intrusion of new technologies which were seen as sources of nuisance and danger; of an increasing feeling that the advance of technology was itself dehumanising and of a growing conviction that unemployment was increasing all over the world because of structural changes produced by technological change.

Long before it became accepted wisdom, he warned that it was misleading to equate "economy" with "manufacturing", and advised technologists to recognise the growing importance of service industries as a major component of the economy and of the complete social machine.

He was knighted in 1975. He is survived by his wife, Eufonia, and one son.

During the 1950s he returned to the British cinema and had small parts in *The Story of Esther Costello* and the police drama, *Gideon's Day*. After his fifth marriage, he had no need to work again, though he was occasionally seen in films and on television.

He spent most of his time on the 25,000 acre estate in Argentina, helping his wife, Alba Julia Lagomarsino, to manage 4,000 head of cattle. In 1977 he produced his autobiography, *Hollywood Hussar*.

He had a son by his first marriage and a daughter by his second. His marriage to Hedy Lamarr produced a son and a daughter.

Suave film star who became cattle rancher

John Loder, who has died at the age of 90, was a handsome leading man of the British cinema during the 1930s and also had a successful career in Hollywood.

An actor who owed more to his dazzling good looks than depth or versatility, he will be best remembered for such roles as Sir Henry Curtis in *King Solomon's Mines* and John Ridd in *Lorna Doone*. He was also in Hitchcock's 1936 thriller, *Sabotage*.

The pick of his Hollywood roles were the eldest son of the mining family in John Ford's *How Green Was My Valley* and Elliott Livingston opposite Bette Davis in the popular wartime melodrama, *Now, Voyager*.

Five times married, his third wife was the actress Hedy Lamarr. He had lived in virtual retirement in Argentina since his fifth marriage, to the wealthy owner of a cattle ranch, in 1958.

Loder was born John Muir Lowe, the son of a major-general, on January 3, 1898. Educated at Eton and Sandhurst, he served in the First World War with the 15th

Hussars in Gallipoli, North Africa and France and was taken prisoner in the spring of 1918.

After the Armistice he worked for the Allied Control Commission. Demobilized in 1923 he used his annuity to buy a pickle factory in Potsdam but the business failed and he lost every penny.

Loder was rescued by Alexander Korda who gave him work as an extra in the 1926 German film, *Madame Wants No Children*, which starred Marlene Dietrich. From there he went briefly to the British cinema and then to Hollywood.

Put under contract by Paramount, he acted in the studio's last silent picture, *The Doctor's Secret*. He returned to Britain in 1932 and resumed his collaboration with Korda on *Wedding Rehearsal* and *The Private Life of Henry VIII*.

He soon graduated to leading roles and though few of his British films were distinguished, his suave looks and imposing physical presence gave him considerable star appeal.

THEODORA CALVERT

Pioneer woman barrister and penal reformer

Theodora Calvert, who died on December 21 at the age of 90, was one of the country's first women barristers.

Born in Birkenhead in 1898, the youngest child of Maurice and Mary Llewellyn Davies, she could trace a direct line of descent from Bradshaw, the first signpost on the death warrant of Charles I.

Liberal values, a zeal for social reform and a pioneering spirit pervaded the family. Her great aunt, Emily Davies, had founded Girton College, Cambridge; her aunt, Margaret Llewellyn Davies, was general secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild, had first given working women a voice and the confidence to use it.

After taking the Law tripos at Cambridge she was the first woman to be admitted to the Inner Temple, where she afterwards practised as a barrister. There was prejudice and hostility in some quarters, and the first time she "ate dinner" was a considerable ordeal. She told how her elder sister came

with her as far as the gate for moral support. The head waiter took charge of her, showing her to a place at the end of a bench where she would not have to climb into her seat; and he kept the press at bay. There were no "facilities" for women - a solution was found by giving her a key to the Benchers' House where there was a cloakroom for lady visitors.

She became a junior in the chambers of the legendary Theo Mathew, well known as "O", the author of forensic fables. Quite often her wig and gown disguised her sex, but some clients would deliberately choose a young woman to represent them, expecting to be treated more kindly.

In 1929 she married Roy Calvert, whom she had met while working for the Howard League for Penal Reform. Her interest in prisons had arisen from a dislike of what she had seen of sentencing by the court. She supported Roy in his single-minded, unemotional and well argued

campaign to abolish capital punishment, and they were joint authors of *The Law-breaker - A Critical Study of the Modern Treatment of Crime*, which became a standard work.

After her death in 1933 she continued the work as chairman of the National Council for the Abolition of the Death Penalty and later as vice-chairman of the Howard League. She also worked as a "poor man's lawyer" and a magistrate in Surrey.

Theodora Calvert was a lifelong agnostic, a pacifist and a passionate Labour supporter. Though her left-wing views did not wane with old age, her attitude to younger people showed a remarkable adaptability and openness of mind.

Her many descendants provided an endless source of interest. For them and for many friends she was a fount of knowledge and wisdom whose affection and support, courage, wit and sound judgement have profoundly influenced their lives.

PROF MASSIMO MILA

Italian music critic who opposed Mussolini

Professor Massimo Mila, one of Italy's foremost music critics who was also well known as an opponent of the dictator Mussolini, died on December 26 aged 78.

Mila had a second life-long passion besides music which was mountaineering. As young man he was able to use his climbing skills to help those resisting Fascism and acted as a courier for them to bring information and letters over the Alps to France.

He wrote widely on music, particularly the Italian composers and, above all Verdi, but also enlighteningly

on Mozart and Stravinsky. His interests were indeed diverse but he took a more conservative view of modern composers like Nono and Stockhausen.

Mila was among a group of young intellectuals in his native Turin who were arrested and imprisoned in 1929 for expressing support for Benedetto Croce, the Italian liberal philosopher, when he had made a lonely public condemnation of Mussolini's totalitarianism.

Mila was arrested again in 1935 for anti-government activities and given a seven

year sentence which he spent learning German and in the translation, to be published post-war by Einaudi, of Wagner's *My Life*.

Released after Italy entered the Second World War, he soon joined the resistance and became an influential figure, both culturally and politically, in early post-war Italy. He taught the history of music for many years at Turin University.

As a leading mountaineer, Mila fought to open the hitherto exclusively-male Italian Academic Alpine Club to women.

Opera house 'could scale down new plans'

By Andrew Billen

The Covent Garden Community Association is waiting to see if the Law Lords will hear its final legal challenge to the Royal Opera House's £100 million development plans.

The community association submitted its petition last month. The High Court and the Appeal Court have already turned down its requests to quash Westminster City Council's planning permission for the huge office and shop development that will pay for the rebuilding of the opera house in 1993.

Although it will not affect the House of Lords' decision, the community association has been heartened by a chartered surveyors' report which maintains that property values in central London are now so high that the opera house could scale down its scheme.

As the scheme stands, 14 buildings in the conservation area will be

demolished, including most of E.M. Barry's Floral Hall.

The Royal Opera House has said that it is not changing more than it need of Covent Garden: even after selling the new shops, offices and homes, it would still have to find another £23 million - that is the gap between the profits from the development and the cost of updating its antiquated premises.

In August, Richard Main & Co, chartered surveyors, conducted its own survey of property values and concluded the commercial development would earn the opera house £36 million more than it had calculated, wiping out the deficit.

Westminster council officers replied that £23 million deficit was correct when the council made its decision in June 1987 but conceded property values had changed.

However, they added that building costs had also increased, albeit at a lower rate than rental values, eating into the projected profits. "Current

indications are that the rate of increase of tender prices is escalating," they said.

In the latest Main report, just completed for the community association, the surveyors estimate that construction cost inflation is running at nearly 15 per cent, increasing the building costs for the project from £92 million to £106 million.

However, the gross development value has risen even more - from £89 million to £130 million.

The report says: "We are not expressing any view on whether on this basis the scheme makes a profit or deficit but are showing that the effect over the past few months is that rents have increased in percentage terms at a faster rate than building costs."

It concludes there have been material changes in market conditions since the scheme was considered by Westminster council in June 1987. "We remain of the view

that this potential change reinforces the need for a comprehensive reappraisal."

Mr Jim Monahan, director of the community association, said: "The significance of this report is that it shows, when you look at every factor, the opera house will not be making a deficit but more money than it needs from its development."

"Main sits on the fence but that is probably because they feel no one in his right mind could decide one way or the other on the figures that the opera house has provided."

Westminster City Council, which confirmed its planning permission this June, has still to sign the "Section 52" agreement giving the opera house the final go ahead. The community association hopes the latest findings will make it think again.

The opera house has said it will announce its revised plans only after all the legal process has ended.

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

BROWN - On December 28th 1968, in hospital after a short illness. Donald Anderson Brown B.Sc. C.Eng. F.I.C.E., aged 79 of Northwood, Middlesex. Beloved husband of Joan, father of John and Anne. Funeral service at Breakspear Crematorium on Tuesday Jan. 3rd, 1969 at 11.00am (East Chapel). Family flowers only. Donations if desired to U.C.H. Intensive Care Unit Research Fund, c/o ESpark Ltd. 104 Plimmer Road, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 1BS.

January at 11.45am followed by cremation. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to The Parkinson Disease Society c/o E Hooper & Son, 13 St James Parade, Bath.

1988, suddenly at home. John Brenner aged 79 years. He was greatly admired and will be remembered with affection by his friends. All enquiries please to F A Holland and Son, Terminus Road, Littlehampton. Tel (0903)713939.

LEE-ELLIOTT - On December 24th peacefully in hospital. Theyre, aged 85, dear brother and uncle. Funeral Golder's Green crematorium Wednesday January 11th at 1.50pm. Family flowers only. Enquiries to

RENDLE - On December 27th 1988, peacefully, Valerie Patricia (Paò) aged 83 years. Beloved wife of the late Hilary. Dearly loved mother of Molly, Michael and Diana and a devoted grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral service at 2pm on Thursday January 5th 1989 in St Paula Church, Yelforton.

ROBERTSON - On December 26th in London, Ronald Mackintosh aged 83, very dear husband of Janice. Funeral on Tuesday 3rd January

WALLWORK - On December 27th, peacefully at St James University Hospital Leeds, Lynn. Former teacher/organiser to the Womens League of Health and Beauty in Birkenhead, Liverpool, Warrington and Chester for 40 years.

WRIGHT - On December 27th 1988 Rowland aged 74 years. Much loved husband of Jean and father of Virginia, Fiona and Nigel. Funeral

SERVICES

**HELENA
INTERNATIONAL**
Established 1974

The professional Introduction Service for
Individuals of the Highest Calibre

For further information or to arrange an informal
appointment with no obligation please phone
(01) 409 2913/01 491 0216
17 Hill Street, Mayfair

★ AFRICAN SPECIALISTS ★
Low cost fares to Africa, Asia, USA,
Australia plus many more
V. cheap travel insurance
Acoms/Visa/Amex/Drivers accepted
AFRO ASIAN TRAVEL LTD
Suite 233, 162/168, Regent St W/1
TEL: 01-437 8255/6/7/8
1. Tel. & company brochures/visas/7/8

PUBLIC NOTICES

CHARITY COMMISSION
General Charity
Ernest Barker Lecture Fund

The Charity Commissioners propose to make a Scheme for this Charity. Copies of the draft Scheme may be obtained from them (ref 250982-2-2-070-411) at 181 Alden House 87-89 Haymarket London SW1V 4QX. Objections and queries

1

David Owen Norris, of the Royal Academy of Music, practising outside Broadcasting House in London yesterday with a variety of bizarre musical instruments, including a tootle-flootle, which he is due to play on a Radio 3 programme.

The theme park, which will resemble well known and long established continental parks such as Legre in Denmark, will probably have a circle of round houses at its core, based on those excavated within the

Born to be great athletes

the muscles were those of the forearm. Since the forearm is only minimally involved in long distance running, there is

The most efficient way of doing this is by a process called oxidative phosphorylation, in which oxygen interacts

Henry Gee
 CHRONICLE-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE 1988.

stone, attest to at least one occasion when the strategic location, on a spur of the Cotswolds, and the powerful defences, were not enough.

URGENT Father in the trust to invest.
drafted by 2 complete paragraphs

CONSTANCE Late from Ostrum Rd
Please get in touch with Sgt. S. Williams
at 120 Bennett Village Terr. Suffin.
New York. 14214

HAPPY LIVES For lonely old people can
be provided by your will. Please include
a bequest for The National Benevolent
Fund For The Aged, 66 London Wall,
London EC2M 4TU.

WANT congratulations Collin on getting
your degree. Christine, Louise, Allison,
Joan and Dad.

BIRTHDAYS

Research Campaign
Fighting cancer on all fronts.

houses in central London, for long lets for their senior executives, prices ranging from £200 - £1,500 pw. Positions open 7 days. Chelsea, 01 225 2066. Notting Hill Gate, 01 221 3534. Unusu fees required.

To

Please telephone the ap

Please allow at least 48 hours for processing.
Social page may be used for promotional purposes.
You may use the page for promotional purposes.

Place Your Classified

appropriate number listed below

...before publication. Any
...be made after 10.30am on
...our Access, Amex, Diners

319 CITY ROAD
LONDON EC1V 1LJ
Solicitor for the creditor
Tel: 278 9395
Ref: 6/7/790J

below between 9am and

enquiries for the Court &
01-833 7347.
or Visa card.

1

—

To Place Your Classified Advertisement

Please telephone the appropriate number listed below between 9am and 6pm. Monday to Friday, or between 9.30am and 1.00pm on Saturdays.

Birth, Marriage and Death Notices	01-481 4000
-----------------------------------	-------------

Birth and Death notices may be accepted over the telephone. For publication the following day please telephone by 5.30pm.
Marriage notices not appearing on the Court & Social Page may also be accepted by telephone.

Appointments	01-481 4481
Public Appointments	01-481 1066
Public Appointments	01-481 1086

Property	01-481 1980
Travel	01-481 1989
U.K. Holidays	01-488 3698
Motors	01-481 4422
Finance	01-481 1020

Personal	01-481 1920
Business to Business	01-481 1982
Education	01-481 1066
Private	01-481 4000

Forthcoming Marriages, Weddings, etc. for the Court and Social Page Cannot be accepted by telephone. Must be in writing and sent to:


**Court & Social Advertising,
Times Newspapers Ltd.,**

**1, Pennington Street,
LONDON E1 9DD**

Please allow at least 48 hours before publication. Any enquiries for the Court & Social page may be made after 10.30am on 01-833 7347.

You may use your Access, Amex, Diners or Visa card.

We fund one third of
all research into the
prevention and cure of
cancer in the UK.
Help us by sending a
donation or making a
legacy to **DRP/12**
2 Cannon Hole terrace,
London SW1Y 5AR



**Cancer
Research
Campaign**

**Fighting cancer
on all fronts.**

MIDNIGHT OF THE SOUL

FIRST LIGHT by Peter Ackroyd



The latest novel from the author of *Hawksmoor* and *Chatterton* will be published in the spring — and also throughout this week in *The Times*, in six extracts

Part 5: As the excavation of the tumulus at Pilgrim Valley continues, an astronomer, Damian Fall, is visited in his nearby observatory by the chief archaeologist, Mark Clare, who has found some strange inscriptions. The tomb is finally revealed, uncovering a terminal chamber and the remains of a hanged man. But there is something else, for which Clare searches late at night

So Mark Clare enters the tumulus, in the dead of night.

The side chamber was completely empty now, its artefacts already collected and removed, yet Mark walked carefully through it as if the outline of the bowl and dish still remained on the floor, as tenuous as the outline of the dark stone against the dark sky. He lay down on the pavement and then very carefully crawled through the morchole in the septal stone which blocked the chamber; he came out in the central passageway, raised himself slowly and then, crouched beneath the low stone roof, he shuffled towards the terminal chamber. He knew his way in the dark but he had no idea how long it took him to reach the chamber, since in this place he never had any sensation of time. He had already noticed how much warmer it was here than in the valley outside, and now it occurred to him that the stone walls of the chamber might keep out more than the winter air. They might also keep out time itself and, for a moment, he had to fight back his panic: he might be trapped here, never able to return to that other dimension from which he came.

He had reached the polygonal chamber but, before he entered it, he looked around in case there was someone hiding here. But he could hear only the sound of his own rapid breathing and now, with arms outstretched, he entered this room of the dead. He could see nothing but, without knowing why and with a low moan he did not understand, he lay down in the attitude of the hanged man whose remains had been found here — the body crouched over, the hands upon the knees, the head thrown back. He could hear the beating of his heart, sounding like a muffled drum through the chamber, and he felt a giddiness in his head. Still he could see nothing but, with his eyes wide open, he knew he was looking at that point where the copstone of the roof was cunningly joined with the upright stones of the wall. And he waited.

Nothing happened. He did not know what he expected — some intimation of the past, perhaps, some alteration in his own being — but, lying on the floor in the posture of the hanged man, he felt nothing. And this was the way it had always been, this bareness, this blankness of stone. So was it with something like resignation that the victim had gone to the sacrifice? Yet who was he to talk of sacrifice?

He repeated these words out loud: "Who? Who am I? Who am I to talk? Who am I to talk of sacrifice?" And now he sensed a presence — the presence behind the words, the presence within his blood, the presence which sustained his own breathing moment by moment. This presence was like a pressure all around him, and he felt it as surely as he felt the hard earth of the floor which bore his weight. And could this be true, after all — that he was as much a part of the earth as the earth was

part of him? It was being sustained, too, moment by moment, continually made and remade, held in place by some inconceivable force. And this was something they had known. This was why they had built the mound of stone.

There were voices close to him — no, not voices. Something else. Mutterings or whisperings from which all sense had gone. And his shock was so great that it was as if he had vanished from the tomb, leaving only these sounds in his place. But they were not close to him. They were coming once more from the end wall, the eastern wall built against the slope of the valley. He rose and walked calmly over to it — he displayed no fear because he did not believe himself to be really here. He was playing someone else's part.

For the first time he put on his torch, and in that momentarily dazzling light the surface of the rock seemed to advance, shudder and retreat. And the beam of the light managed to dispel his fear, helping him forward down the bright path of cause and effect. Now he realized that he might have mistaken the sound of an underground stream, or even of a sudden wind entering the tumulus itself. Yes, the noises were clearly coming from behind the eastern wall, from somewhere within the valley. He put his ear against it, not wishing to breathe until he had identified the source of the sound. He could hear those murmurings which were like the distant residue of shouted words. But, if the stones of this end wall were as massive as those in the rest of the grave, then no echo should be able to pass through them. He was quite calm now in the glow of the torchlight. He considered the possibility that certain vibrations from the grave came to a focus at this point but, no, these sounds were coming from somewhere beyond the wall itself. If this were so, then there must be a hollow space behind these stones... and at once he knew. He was on the other side of a souterrain. An underground passage. An earth house. A fogou.

This was why the chamber grave had been built against the side of the valley; its terminal chamber had almost been inserted into the slope so that it would be easier to hollow out a tunnel within the earth itself. And this was why the chamber grave was not at the centre of the stone circle; it was an entrance, an opening into another passage which would — Mark felt certain now — lead to the centre of the stones. This passage was not the culmination of some ritual but rather its beginnings, with the hanged man marking the way forward. He was the door-keeper to the world beneath the ground.

It was some time later when he looked at his watch. Five o'clock. But he could not leave this place, now that he had learned its secret. He knew that he would have to remain here until day-break, until the others came, so that they could then at once begin work on the removal of the stones which concealed the underground passage.

He must have slept, and dreamt, because Kathleen, his wife, was taking him by the hand and leading him through the stones. They were descending steps into the earth, and he knew that she was taking him to the object of his quest. And yet they were not travelling downward into the earth but upward; they were treading the stone steps of Swinburn's Column. When they



reached its summit they found Damian Fall looking through a telescope at Aldebaran, while Kathleen wrote words in red chalk upon a ruined wall.

The image of these words was still imprinted upon the darkness when Mark opened his eyes. And at once he was filled with a horror of this place: to have slept here, to have dreamt here, was like a kind of death. He turned on his torch and looked at his watch. Seven o'clock.

At the time of this discovery under the ground, Damian Fall finally breaks down.

No. This could not be so. There was a world around him still. He lived and moved. He still existed, or else why should he be suffering so? No. It was only Aldebaran. Only the red star had been shaken from its accustomed place. Somehow Aldebaran had fallen from its

sphere and, with the clairvoyance of one who has seen into extremity, Damian connected its fall with the disturbances in Pilgrim Valley. The shadows and the voices had been real, after all; they had come to warn him. Barren. Old. He went over to the monitor which interpreted the faint impulses caught by the electronic camera: here on the screen was the image of the great star itself, its light and dark patches suggesting that it was no longer of uniform brightness but was being twisted apart in some giant convulsion. All these images were growing paler, too, which meant that the star was becoming steadily hotter, coming much closer to the earth. The universe was not falling, just the one red giant star which had slipped out of its constellation and was now moving towards him. Damian felt his stomach melting in the heat. He looked down at the monitor again, and saw how the computer-

generated squares of light were breaking up and shuddering at the edges of the screen. And he caught his own face reflected in that screen, bathed in red but with the mouth and eyes quite dark.

He moved to the other side of the observatory and, with a deep sigh, opened the dome. Slowly the two hemispheres of the roof parted, and starlight flooded the chamber, as it had always done. Damian wanted to look up with his usual calm eye and to recognize the familiar constellations shining down upon him; but he saw only random points of light swaying above his head and ready to fall. And he looked into the abysses between them, the gulfs of darkness which were not of this time, not of this time in which he had his being. And there were no stars, there were only words with which we choose to decorate the sky. These points of brightness were travelling from objects al-

'This passage was not the culmination of some ritual but rather its beginnings, with the hanged man marking the way forward. He was the door-keeper to the world beneath the ground'

ready long dead and the visible firmament was no more than a wave of dying energy, eddying through unimaginable spaces to some unknown destination. The universe was a structure established upon... established upon what? Nothing. And as he looked up he was filled with the fear of emptiness, the fear of non-being. And he became nothing. He crept into a corner of the observatory and sat down with his knees drawn up against his chest, crouched under the vast emptiness of the universe.

Mark Clare has entered the passageway leading from the tomb, and in a chamber far beneath the ground, has discovered an ancient coffin with the words "Old Barren One" inscribed upon it. But here lies the origin of the Mints, and they come at night, with a kinsman and fellow villager, Simon Trout, to retrieve it. Farmer Mint's plan is to take the coffin to Joey Hanover, who has been revealed to be a close relative of the Mints.

"Be careful with him. Don't shake him up." There were three men in the subterranean passage, two of them carrying a large object wrapped in black plastic sheeting while the third walked ahead of them with a lamp. But they did not really need the light: the two carriers seemed to know their way so well that, despite their burden, they were able to anticipate every curve and declination in the tunnel. They were accustomed, also, to the changes they felt within themselves whenever they journeyed under the ground: they left the domain of ordinary time, and the echoes of their voices were like the other echoes which they sensed all around them. Time was curving back upon them, encircling them and also protecting them. It was as if they lost their ordinary selves and became the servants of this force — no different, perhaps, from those who first built this passage and from whom they believed themselves to be descended.

"He's in safe hands. None could be safer. Not on this earth." The first carrier stopped for a moment, and looked back at his companion. "What do you say, Boy?"

"As safe as houses. Isn't that what those fools call it? The house under ground?"

"Don't talk too loud." Simon Trout, who was carrying the lamp in front of the Mints, put his finger up to his lips. "They may be listening."

"The only ones listening here know all about us," Farmer Mint said. "They know our voices." And indeed only the dead could have heard them: it was into the round space of souterrain, beneath the centre of the stone circle, that the bodies of the villagers were always brought; in this hollow within the rock, where the archaeologists had lost their lights, the corpses were prepared for burning and the smoke of their funeral fires ascended into those shafts and fissures which so resembled a cone.

"I'm talking about the ones still living," Simon Trout explained impatiently. "They might be listening. I'm talking about them above ground who may still be on the watch."

"There's no one watching. Don't you worry," Farmer Mint gave the signal to his son, and they picked up their burden again. "They've all gone home by now."

It was the night of Mark Clare's rescue from the hidden chamber, where he had found the wooden casket with the words "Old Barren One" carved upon its side. This was the discovery which his colleagues had hoped for and, as soon as Mark was lifted out of the pit and taken into the upper air, they began to organize their

excavation of this area. The pit itself would have to be thoroughly cleared, but the archaeologists had noticed that, although the central area had been swept clean of objects, there were traces of ash against the side of the rocks there; and the roof of the cavern above seemed, on first inspection, to be scorched or blackened. There must have been fires here, just at the point where the passages came together. But the prime object was the coffin which Mark Clare had found; this wooden casket would have to be removed, opened, and its contents examined.

It was long past midnight now and, under the cover of the darkest part of the night, the three men began to climb out of the passage which they knew so well. But they need not have feared discovery: as Farmer Mint had guessed, the others had gone home hours before. Simon Trout emerged cautiously from the entrance hidden in the copse, making sure to shield the lamp with his hands before he ventured into the cold night air. Farmer Mint and Boy Mint followed, alternately heaving and pushing the wooden coffin until it, too, re-emerged in the outer world. They kept it wrapped in the thick plastic sheeting, and laid it carefully on the hard ground. "Let him down gently," Farmer Mint whispered. "Lay him down gently on his own ground."

"He shouldn't have to leave," his son whispered back. "He shouldn't have to be taken out in the night. Not like this." His companions understood what he meant — the wooden casket and its occupant were in the wrong place, almost in the wrong dimension. The wrong time. And for a moment Boy Mint thought he heard noises coming from within the coffin.

"He'll be back, Boy. He'll be back in good time. He understands."

Simon Trout glanced nervously around, and saw Damian Fall's cottage across the field. "Who lives there now?" he asked, pointing towards it. "Who is it?"

Boy Mint chuckled. "He won't be any trouble. He won't. I saw him go off hours ago. Like a lamb to the slaughter. There's only the angels left there now. The guardian angels."

As his son spoke, Farmer Mint bent down and reverently passed his hand across the coffin. "We can't take him home," he said, as if anticipating their thoughts. "Because they might look for him there. And we can't take him into Colcorum. Too many foreigners. Begging your pardon," he added, lifting his cap to Simon, who lived in the village, "but there are strangers there. So the Boy and I have come up with a beautiful plan."

Simon Trout could hardly contain his impatience and anxiety. "What plan is this?"

Boy Mint put out his palm and then slapped it with his other hand. "We take him to Uncle Joey," he said. "Joey Hanover, as was."

"But —" Farmer Mint took up the narrative. "He's family, isn't he? He's one of us." He chuckled. "And no one would suspect him, would they? No one knows that there's a connection, do they?"

"They do not!" Boy Mint clapped his father on the shoulder. "They'd as soon suspect Uncle Joey as —" He searched for an appropriate name. "As Miss Evangeline Tupper herself."

"Have you told him?" Simon Trout seemed somewhat doubtful. "Have you warned him?"

"Not in so many words. But he's a good boy. He'll understand." He gestured to Boy Mint and together they took up the coffin again. "Be careful," he said. "We don't want to wake him. Not yet."

TOMORROW: SPIRITS, DREAMS, FIRE

Promotion of a cute character

TELEVISION

Michael Heath's "Great Bores of Today" in the latest *Private Eye* has a bespectacled pullover decorating a Christmas tree while droning on about the cleverness of the special effects in the feature film *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. Anyone who has had occasion over the past few days to linger at metropolitan bus stops will find the cartoon altogether too near the mark for comfort.

The ability to convince an audience of the presence of an invisible phenomenon is a litmus test of proficiency in theatrical mad-scenes. One remembers James Stewart's performance in the film *Harvey*, whose eponymous bunny kept itself strictly incorporeal. *Roger Rabbit* and the *Secrets of Toontown* (TV) showed the mad scene principle in its modern setting, as Bob Hoskins played to thin air or to a selection of remote control servo-mechanisms still awaiting the animator's flick of paint.

With its grinding note of percep-



Mad scene? Bob Hoskins with Roger in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*

tual derangement, this is indeed the version of the film I would prefer to see: real actors imagining themselves straying into a cartoon universe observable only to them and haunted by conceivable hallucinations.

The programme did its duty in

itemizing the multifarious technical gimmicks of shooting and post-production, and in detailing the history of such films, all of which tended to belie the claims for uniqueness on which the publicity campaign rests. *Coco the Clown* and *Porky the Pig* made

early ventures into this half-world, as did also Dick Van Dyke and Gene Kelly, hoofing in tandem with non-Equity phantoms.

There were also appearances by the faces behind the original voices of Betty Boop and Bugs Bunny, which may have destroyed at least one illusion long held by old men. The syrupy, hyperbolic narration by one of the film's actresses took its beat squarely from the notion that absolutely everyone involved in such a millennial affair should be recommended without delay for canonization. This is bunk. Someone had an idea; someone else expanded it; dozens of other someone were employed in its realization. That, as we say in showbusiness, is showbiz.

The most remarkable thing was that this unabashed puff — an overblown trailer sandwiched cunningly between *Gremlins* and *National Lampoon's Class Reunion* — should have been transmitted at an hour when its presumed audience might be thought to have been in bed.

Martin Cropper

Don't shoot the pianist

TOURING OPERA

The Magic Flute Queen Elizabeth Hall

The City of Birmingham Touring Opera landed in London midway through its nationwide tour for three performances of a *Magic Flute* with an orchestra of scarcely more than a baker's dozen, virtually no Brotherhood at all, and three of the shillest boys in the land.

As if this were not enough (and it certainly was not), the company had commissioned John Wells to make a new translation. It was too wordy for both singers and audience to absorb at the necessarily brisk pace it carried; and it included such gems as "through love alone we are alive"; not, I think, quite what Schikaneder meant by "Wir leben durch die Lieb' allein". It was their other special con-

dition which saved the evening. Jonathan Dove had supplied a new, slimline orchestration and, tucked behind the single row of wind soloists, he fleshed out his score with a piano part of unremitting delight.

Time and again, whether in spangling the Queen of Night's coloratura in duetting with Sarastro, or in the jubilant run into the finale, the ear would be teased into imagining it was hearing some glorious apotheosis of a Mozart piano concerto. It was a perfectly calculated balancing act and a tour de force of musical imagination.

So, in theory, was Graham Vick's production. Within its rectangle of rainbow hangings and its vast central triangular climbing frame of wood, the stage was alive with saffron and surl. Papageno's beast was no more and no less than a tangle of batik cloth; his bells hung from his own breast; the animals had cardboard masks.

Such economy of means was fine as far as it went. But when

Monostatos became Sarastro's assistant simply by removing his eye-mask, and when Isis and Osiris were invoked all but inaudibly by an absent Brotherhood (the few voices off who happened not to be on), both ear and eye were not a little stretched in their suspension of disbelief.

Stronger singing performances would have compelled the attention and properly focused the likeable disingenuousness of the production. But, with the exception of Eileen Hulse, whose Pamina should be snapped up by at least one London opera house, the cast was patchy and, I suspect, a little tired.

Paul Nilon's Tamino was ardent but unrelentingly so; Patrick Wheatley was stronger in voice than in character as Papageno; Mark Beesley weakened his Sarastro by gabbling and Alison Truefit's Queen of Night was firmly earth-bound. The tour continues through February and March.

Hilary Finch

FRIDAY PAGE

Women whose marriages end with a note on the table learn lessons from heartbreak, writes Victoria McKee

Irene wishes her husband was dead. That way their 32 years together would seem less of a sham. Barbara "could have written a book of 'if only's'", but more than anything wishes she had learnt how to communicate with her husband — been more of a wife and less of a housewife and mother.

Ann thinks that if she had spent more time with her husband she might have less cause to feel bitter — even if that meant going to football matches with him instead of scouring the house spotless for his return.

All three women, the focus of the BBC's 40 Minutes documentary next week, have reflections on the reasons for their abandonment which should cause any woman in a long-standing marriage to take a thoughtful, appraising look at her relationship.

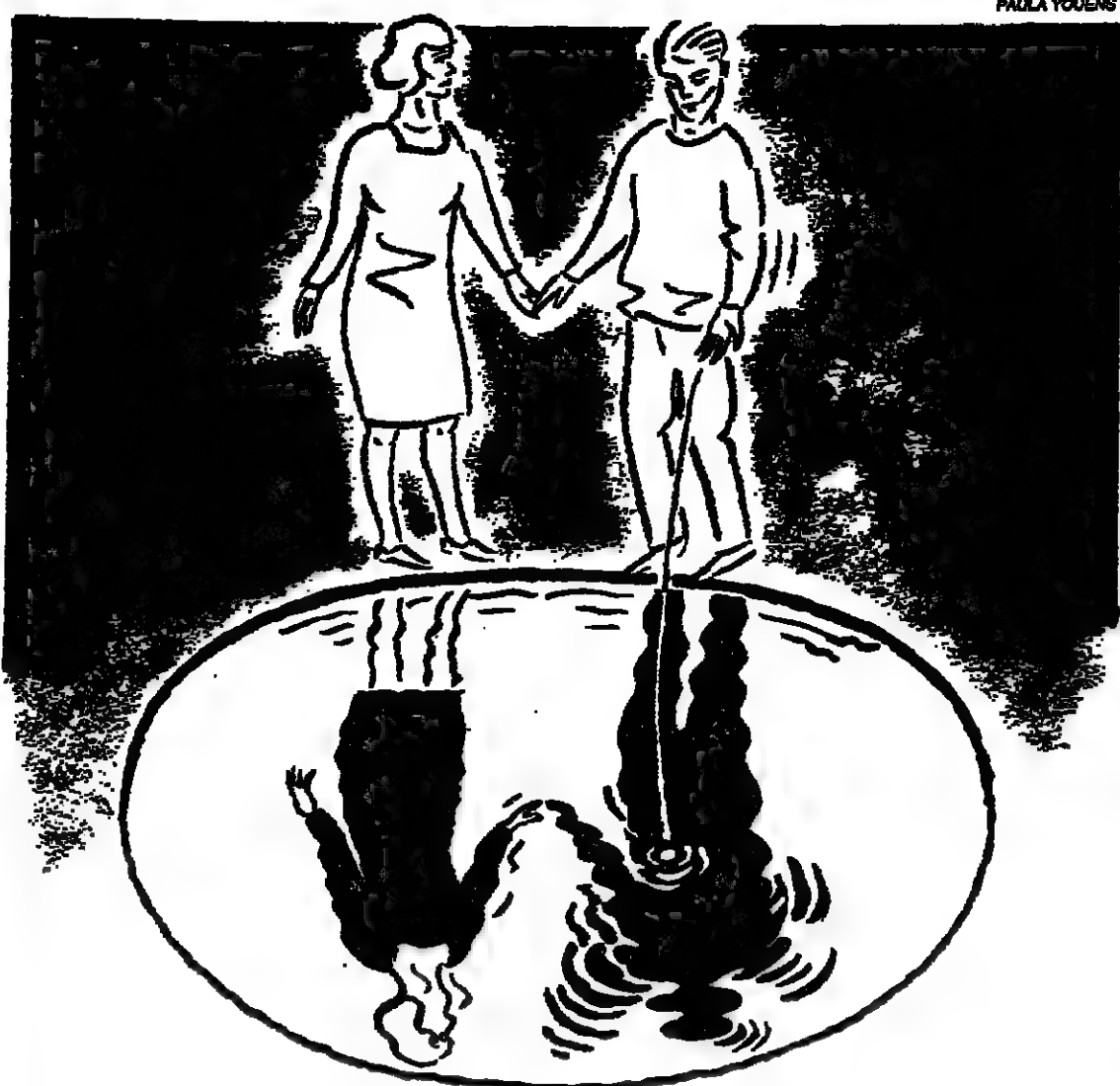
"I never thought it would happen to me," they all say — but a depressing number of middle-aged women are left every year by men in search of an elusive last gasp of ecstasy, often with a younger woman. Denied the dignity of widowhood, the women left behind find themselves fighting for survival — emotional and financial — in a world they believe somehow blames them for their husband's disappearance.

"You feel everyone knows you are on your own and why you are on your own: you want desperately to explain that you are normal," says Irene, an attractive 57-year-old whose husband brought her morning cup of tea, drove her to work and left a note on the kitchen table saying he was not coming back. He has not seen his children, or two new grandchildren, since. Irene later discovered he had gone off with a woman 22 years younger than herself.

That was nearly three years ago, and she still haunts the places they used to go together, trying to exorcise the past and come to terms with her future as a single woman. Once she even saw his boat — but could not quite make out the three figures on it, laughing in the sun.

"You look back and put a lot together," she muses. "You realize you've been making a lot of excuses. I think I had too much trust. I never questioned his desire to go off boating on his own, even though I knew that previously there had been other women. I tend to take people at face value and think they have the same loyalty I have. I still don't believe you can go through life looking over your shoulder, but sometimes I wonder if I had left him after one of the earlier liaisons, when I was much younger, whether I'd have had a better life."

Pauline Sutcliffe, senior clinical supervisor at the Institute of Family Therapy, and also in private practice at the Family Therapy Practice Centre in Dulwich, thinks Irene probably would have. "If one partner is ever uncomfortable with the behaviour of another they should take advice, not keep it secret, suffer it and put up with it," she says. "Sometimes women do so out of fear that they will lose their husbands if they challenge something — but this marriage failed in the end anyway." A bell that starts



Goodbye dear, I'm off for ever

ringing in your head is not going to go away, she says — and will eventually take its toll.

Barbara, aged 62, was a consultant's wife who raised her four children in a splendid, six-bedroomed Sussex home, doing voluntary work and enjoying her position as a pillar of the community. Since her desertion eight years ago she opted to become a shepherdess in rural Gloucestershire with only dogs and sheep for company.

She remembers how she used to have her husband's dinner on the table every night the moment he walked in. "I knew he wanted it that way, and made sure everything was always the way he liked it. It was so stupid. Perhaps if I hadn't been so concerned with the food and the set-up... but I felt that if he wanted something he would stipulate it."

After 26 years of marriage her husband told her he had discovered she "wasn't the right woman" for him, and that he was going off in search of the right one. He has since remarried. Although Barbara says she is sure he had not found his new wife when he left her, this could, Sutcliffe suggests, be self-delusion to save some pride.

Barbara says: "I believe men have a mid-life crisis where they want to change either spouse or job. Maybe if he'd taken up the challenge of a professorship..."

She went through two years of trying to save her marriage, with her

husband suggesting a therapist she could go to "for comfort — like a dummy to a baby", she says angrily. "I naively believed, with my background, that the therapist would be dedicated to trying to save the marriage: I was so hidebound to believe that marriages were meant to last forever. But I discovered my husband had already told him he was determined to go — and he was just trying to help me come to terms with that. I wish I'd asked him at the start: 'Do you believe in people staying together?'"

Sutcliffe advises that unless couples start therapy together, they should really go to separate therapists for just this reason. "I would always take a neutral position and say, 'I'd like you both to find out what you want'. You cannot promise you're there to save a marriage."

Ann, aged 44, who lives on a modern housing estate in Redditch, Worcestershire, with her two teenage children, was deserted by her husband a short time before they were due to celebrate their silver wedding anniversary this year. She swears he did not leave her for another woman — he gave the frequently heard male cry for "more space". But he set up home with a 40-year-old he knew from work shortly after.

Their son, who works at the same factory as an apprentice, does not speak to his father, and the support

of both her children has helped keep Ann going. But she pronounces herself "very bitter: I'll never get over it, never forgive him".

She has always cleaned the house almost obsessively — the 25-year-old cooker gleams — and, as she runs the sponge unnecessarily around the kitchen sink, reflects, "He seemed so happy to have me there to come home to, but maybe I should have spent more time doing things with him. You don't see these things at the time."

She has found some solace in Graham, a man whose wife left him with two children the year before. They enjoyed an extended family Christmas together, but are wary of re-commitment. Still, Ann now goes for rides on Graham's motorbike. "This proves there is life after Les after all," she laughs.

The other two women are still without a man in their lives, and are not sure they want one. Both tried singles clubs and dating agencies and Barbara, a matronly woman with iron grey hair and spectacles, somewhat surprisingly admits: "I was convinced that I must try sexual relationships — all kinds of sexual relationships — and threw myself into all sorts of dangerous situations that I would be horrified if I found my daughters in. But that was eight years ago, before the advance of Aids, which makes a big difference. I was fortunate that all the men treated me with respect, and I was

happy to hear later that this was a very normal part of the process."

With hindsight she wishes that she had not opted for such a solitary existence — on the small farm left to her by her mother — but feels needed, at least, by her animals. Her husband has provided for her financially, with a third of his salary. "I wouldn't want anyone to think I was earning a living out of sheep," she says. But the family home was sold so that he could buy a new one, and she wonders what will happen when he retires and she has no pension rights. "I will need to renegotiate in a few years' time," she says, "and since he has remarried he may be tougher."

Irene, who found her full-time job as a secretary kept her sane, was too shy for the singles clubs. She has been happier since signing up for evening classes in bridge, where she finds making friends easier, since motives are not so blatant.

But after nearly three years she is still waiting anxiously for the legal side of her affairs to be settled. "I'd paid the mortgage for years — he was often out of work, and his money was sporadic," she says, "but we were looking forward to retiring on some money he had coming from his parents, then I discovered he'd already signed it over to her. So I have no idea how difficult the future will be financially, when I retire."

Christina Gorna, a barrister who deals with many divorce cases involving "bimbo-loving husbands" who leave their middle-aged wives, as she puts it, warns: "You never let the man have his decree absolute until he has settled all the question of pension rights. The new 1984 divorce reform act shows that the court has a duty to postpone granting the decree absolute until long-term provision is settled. But under the 1984 act there is no more about keeping someone in the style to which she has been accustomed: it favours the clean-break principle, and looks at the wife's capacity to earn."

"Jobs are easier to come by now than they were a few years ago, but who is going to give a 52-year-old who hasn't worked in 30 years a good one? She is expected to use what earning capacity she has, and might be expected to take in lodgers to make ends meet. She has no right to the family home once the children are grown, and losing a husband can mean losing not only pension and insurance rights but her whole way of life."

The producer of the programme, Nikki Cheetham — who makes powerful use of the women's home movies of their family life — had originally hoped to focus on abandoned spouses of both sexes. But the letters came in at a rate of five to one from women, "and most of the men we contacted seemed to have found new partners fairly quickly. With women the age factor was against them," she says.

It was while working on the section on love, sex and marriage for the series *Out of the Doll's House* that Cheetham first became intrigued by the difference between widowhood and abandonment. "Widows have a certain status," she says, "but women whose husbands had run off felt that others would always think there was no smoke without fire, and that they were somehow to blame."

Cheetham would still like to make a programme on abandoned men — and on the men who run away — if enough come forward.

● The Forty Minutes documentary "To Have and To Hold" will be broadcast on BBC2 next Thursday at 9.30pm and repeated the following Sunday.

Mao chic



BARBARA AMIEL

My post-Christmas gloom was brought on by accidentally glancing in a mirror and seeing myself in a red paper hat. Sitting next to me, I could hear Woodrow Wyatt explaining how men of my age were really best off with women a good 20 years younger than themselves. Well, in the immortal words of Mandy Rice-Davies, he would, wouldn't he. But how could I deny it? Afterwards, I went home and watched Julia Iglesias singing "To All the Girls I've Loved Before" and thought that although he was visibly holding his stomach in, I'd risk almost any disease to be on the list. Instead, I moodily opened a box of Bendick's Bittermints and picked up the new January *Vogue* (which is enough brand name journalism for a dozen columns).

Which gets me to the point of this column, namely an article on Julie Christie by *Vogue's* assistant features editor, Lisa Armstrong. Miss Christie has discovered Kampuchea only 14 years after everyone else (except, on the evidence of the article, Miss Armstrong and Condé Nast). Like Captain Renault in *Casablanca*, she was shocked, shocked to discover that genocide had gone on there.

Miss Christie went to Kampuchea last autumn to make a documentary for Oxfam and although the Kampuchean may not have seen her coming, Oxfam certainly did. Her vision is a familiar one. Kampuchea's past plight at the hands of the Khmer Rouge was the fault of the Americans.

Furthermore, should the Vietnamese Communists withdraw from their current occupation of Kampuchea and be replaced by the waiting Khmer Rouge, it will also be the fault of the West because we are not sending foreign aid to Kampuchea. If we would only subsidize the Vietnamese through Oxfam, plead Christie and Armstrong, we could keep Hanoi in Kampuchea.

This is an urgent mission and Christie minces no words. To underline her commitment, *Vogue* tells us her face is now devoid of make-up. After I had scanned the photographs of the unmade-up Christie I re-read the article. One omission puzzled me. Try as I might, I could find no mention at all of the People's Republic of China, that large chunk of the earth which occupies the map from the Sea of Japan all the way across the longitudes till it gets

to the Muztagh peak. What could this mean? Surely the keeper-of-the flame, the tough-minded Miss Armstrong who uses this same *Vogue* article to sternly lecture such "airheads" as the "ill-informed Whitney Houston", didn't skip her geography lessons? One can't blame Miss Christie, who admits she hadn't worked out that Kampuchea was Cambodia till she practically arrived in Phnom Penh, but hasn't Oxfam or Armstrong pointed out to their new recruit that it is the Chinese who armed the Khmer Rouge and continue to arm them? Has the neo-Marxist fog in the editorial offices of *Vogue* obscured the simple observation that the only hope for Kampuchea lies in a deal between Moscow and Peking?

It all reminded me of the fury that greeted the 1977 publication of Francis Ford Coppola's book *Cambodia Year Zero*. Pouchaud's book, the first comprehensive account of what was going on under the Khmer Rouge regime, was greeted with clenched teeth by left-wing intellectuals. Noam Chomsky called on Pouchaud to "stem the flood of lies" about the well-meaning revolutionaries. No one wanted to sully the budding love affair with China. I can't recall Oxfam calling for the downfall of the Khmer Rouge at the time either or testifying

against them at the US Congressional Hearings on human rights violations in May 1977. But could it be that, 12 years later, the last bastion of Mao-chic sits in the elegant Hanover Square offices of Condé Nast?

I've often wondered why women's magazines are the final refuge of that Sixties witch-brew of woolly mindedness. For every Lisa Armstrong, there are so many clever women who don't seem to get taken on board. Could the stranglehold these old-style New Leftists have on the editorial pages actually be a sexist plot to discredit female writers or women's magazines? As for Miss Christie, I mourn the day when what Miss Armstrong calls "the mark of probity" took her over. Before probity hit, flimflamers could enjoy what *Vogue* now labels as the "shallow hedonism" of films like *Shampoo*. I miss the Julie Christie of *Billy Liar*, *Darling*, *Petulia* and *Dr Zhivago*, breathily and made-up, back in the days before she discovered vegetarianism, animal vivisection, Lisa Armstrong and Oxfam.

I can't recall Oxfam calling for the downfall of the Khmer Rouge at the time either or testifying against them at the US Congressional Hearings on human rights violations in May 1977. But could it be that, 12 years later, the last bastion of Mao-chic sits in the elegant Hanover Square offices of Condé Nast?

I've often wondered why women's magazines are the final refuge of that Sixties witch-brew of woolly mindedness. For every Lisa Armstrong, there are so many clever women who don't seem to get taken on board. Could the stranglehold these old-style New Leftists have on the editorial pages actually be a sexist plot to discredit female writers or women's magazines? As for Miss Christie, I mourn the day when what Miss Armstrong calls "the mark of probity" took her over. Before probity hit, flimflamers could enjoy what *Vogue* now labels as the "shallow hedonism" of films like *Shampoo*. I miss the Julie Christie of *Billy Liar*, *Darling*, *Petulia* and *Dr Zhivago*, breathily and made-up, back in the days before she discovered vegetarianism, animal vivisection, Lisa Armstrong and Oxfam.

Baby, you can drive my car...

...but only when I'm drunk. Why are so many men willing to hand the car keys to their wives at this time of the year?

The news this week is that there has been a 20 per cent drop in arrests for drink driving over Christmas. The heroines of the hols are said by some to be women who have helped keep figures down by an increasing tendency to take the wheel when their partners start to sing "A Long Long Way To Tipperary". (In some areas of Britain almost 70 per cent of motorists breath-tested were women chauffeur men home from parties. Most people arrested were, as usual, men.)

This drop in drinking-driving is good news for people who might otherwise have faced jail, disgrace and loss of licence over the holiday (as well as those who might have been squashed flat by some

careless reveller). But it is not a giant step forward for womankind, says Barry Ross, a psychologist who is joint managing director of the Strategic Research Group, which has done wheels-within-wheels studies about what our car driving reveals about us. Ross believes that although the upshot of getting your wife to stay sober while you drink may be sensible, the motives are often sexist.

"In everyday life handing over the keys of the car to his wife is not something a man does easily. First, most men suffer from the delusion that they are better drivers. Just as

important is the special relationship some men have with their cars. Cars represent a man's personal base at a time when many men feel much of their territory has been invaded. You don't give all this up lightly."

Inviting the wife to invade this personal base and become an honorary chap on New Year's Eve, high days and holidays, is, Ross says, a trade-off. "Men do it simply so they can have fun." What interests Ross is why more women don't say: "Blow it, let's both have fun and take a taxi."

Few men, it seems, are entirely immune to the heady semantic signalling aroused by the question of who drives. Even Ross admits to being a twitchy passenger with his wife. When I asked Warwickshire's Chief Constable, Peter Joslin, who this year coordinated the biggest anti-drink drive campaign, how happy he feels about being driven around by his wife, he gave a small groan and asked whether he had to answer.

"My wife," he said cautiously, "is a good driver of 20 years' experience with no accidents and I don't feel at all comfortable with her. I'm a nervous passenger."

Even if he were not a nervous passenger, Joslin said he would not expect his wife to drive him home from a party. "I find the idea that women should be prepared to go all evening without a drink rather chauvinistic. I don't see why women shouldn't have fun like everybody else."

Sergeant Roy Chandler is accident prevention officer for the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. As it happens, his wife does not have a driving licence. "But if she did I wouldn't expect her to drive me to parties. Why should that necessarily be a wife's responsibility?"

Chandler, who as an examiner for the Institute of Advanced Drivers has seen "some super women drivers and some bad ones", refuses to get drawn into arguments about which sex performs

best. But he does admit that it affords him some quiet amusement to watch the everyday habits of male motorists. "You've only got to watch a couple driving to work. It's almost always the man who drives, then gets out and reluctantly hands over the car to his wife who is then allowed to drive home or to her work. Well, I don't want to get into a man-woman debate, but if I was that woman I'd think 'dammit, if I'm fit to drive myself to work, I'm fit to drive you'."

According to Joslin, the real answer to the question of who gets to drive this New Year's Eve is not to arbitrarily elect womankind as honorary good sport and soberside, — never a very joyous role to play — but for both men and women to take the problem more seriously.

"I agree with Peter Bottomley that attitudes are changing," he says. "Two years ago no self-respecting young man would drink non-alcoholic lager. Now they do. Few women would have said: 'You are past it, I'll drive.' Now, thank God, they do."

Julia Orange



Sarah Armstrong-Jones at the wheel: many women will be handed the keys on New Year's Eve

AND SO TO BED
Brass & Wooden Beds • Sofa Beds
Bedding • Bedlinen
Bedroom Furniture
Significant Savings On Our
Fabulous Merchandise
Plus Clearance Items At Substantial Savings!

Winter Sale
Sale On Now

LONDON: 638/648 Kings Rd. 01-731 3593
18/20 Baker St. 01-487 4460 • 96B Camden High St. 01-388 0304
BOURNEMOUTH: The Quail Centre,
Old Chiswick Rd. 0122 296-884
MANCHESTER: 5 Ridgefield off King St. 061-834 9259
KESWICK: Lake Rd. 07687 74881
TUNBRIDGE WELLS: The Pavilions, 0892 515099
ST. ALBANS (Herts): 3 The Maltings, 0727 44233
BIRMINGHAM: 21 Castle St. 031-225 2575

Free Sale Catalogue, Phone 01-731 3593

AND SO TO BED

**HEAL'S
SALE
NOW ON**
STORES OPEN MONDAY 2nd JAN.

Up to 20% off selected ranges of Heal's
own upholstery in fabrics & leather
20% off selected ranges of fitted
bedroom furniture
15% off Heal's handmade beds
At least 10% off big selection of Heal's
dining, storage & occasional furniture
At least 10% off Heal's bedroom furniture,
beds, childrens furniture & sofas

Save at least 30% on discontinued and less
than perfect fabrics, China, Glass and Linens

Up to 50% off discontinued and display furniture
in our Tottenham Court Road and Croydon stores

INTEREST FREE CREDIT
Subject to status - minimum loan value £500.
Ask for written details at our stores (Licensed Credit Brokers).
All offers subject to availability.

■ A STOREHOUSE PLC COMPANY

London • Guildford • Croydon
Kingston • Reading • West Thurrock

—

Opt-out schools to be vetted

By Douglas Broom
Education Reporter

State schools seeking to opt out of local authority control are to be vetted by school inspectors before ministers consider their applications for grant-maintained status.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education has been told by Mr Kenneth Baker, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, to prepare confidential reports on the schools to help him decide whether they should be allowed to opt out.

The Department of Education and Science said yesterday: "These will not be full-scale school inspections but inspectors will visit the schools to give the Secretary of State a picture of what is going on there. The reports will be confidential."

The inspectors' views are likely to be crucial, particularly where schools are seeking to opt out to avoid closure.

Schools which opt out will be run by their own governors without the local authority support network of advisers and education officers and Mr Baker wants to ensure that the pioneers of grant-maintained status succeed.

News of his decision to call in the inspectorate came as governors at the London Oratory School in the Fulham Road, Chelsea, west London, announced that it had become the first inner London school to vote to opt out.

Parents of the 1,180 pupils at the Roman Catholic comprehensive boys' school voted by more than 20 to one in favour of opting out in a secret ballot, the result of which was announced yesterday.

On a turn-out of 63.2 per cent, the voting was 1,170 (95.59 per cent) in favour of opting out and 54 (4.41 per cent) against.

The school, which belongs to the Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri, operates within the state sector through the Labour controlled Inner London Education Authority as a voluntary-aided school.

The governors want to opt out to give the school autonomy. Mr John McIntosh, the headmaster, described the ballot result as "a welcome vote of confidence".

The turnout, which was lower than in any opt-out vote so far announced, was the result of confusion in families who may not have realized that both mother and father had the right to vote as individuals, he said.

But Mr Neil Fletcher, the head teacher, said: "The parents of the current pupils have voted to opt out of their responsibilities to Londoners of the future. It is not a positive vote, but a vote for isolation and insularity."

The London Oratory School is the ninth state school in England to vote to opt out and another 24 schools have started the process of consulting parents about seeking Grant Maintained status.

Devastation in the mountains' shadow



Only a few large buildings are still standing in Spitak where 80 per cent of the town's population were killed. In the right foreground can be seen tents for the homeless.

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

The final death toll in the earthquake which struck the Soviet Republic of Armenia on December 7 is likely to be less than half the estimate of 55,000 originally given by the Soviet authorities.

Mr Yuri Chaplygin, spokesman for the Soviet Council of Ministers, said yesterday that a total of 24,854 bodies had been recovered by Wednesday.

Rescue workers expected to find only 100 to 150 more bodies. No explanation was offered for the large discrepancy and no figure was

given for the number of people who might be missing.

Spitak, with a population of 20,000, was completely destroyed, as were sections of the nearby city of Leninakan and the towns of Kirovakan and Stepanavan. More than 100 villages were also devastated.

Officials have been wary of giving a total death toll because of the number of Armenian refugees believed to be in the area after fleeing from Azerbaijan. The refugees were not registered as residents, as is otherwise obligatory, and there was no way of estimating how many of them might have died. It was not

possible either to estimate the numbers who might have fled from the disaster area immediately after the earthquake.

Until yesterday the official estimate of 55,000 had been regarded by rescue workers and many Armenians as being on the conservative side. The scale of the damage and the wide area affected had raised fears that up to 100,000 might have been killed.

Armenian officials said yesterday that all the damaged areas would be rebuilt, but that the town of Spitak would be moved to a new site a little further south. The spokesman said reconstruction was expected to cost a total of

\$8.5 billion and was projected to take two years. He said that much of the cost would be met from national, not republican, funds.

Some of the money donated from other parts of the Soviet Union and from abroad is to go towards building a rehabilitation centre for those injured in the earthquake and a factory to produce artificial limbs.

According to Mr Chaplygin, the Armenian earthquake has left thousands of people, many of them children, with severe spinal injuries or without limbs.

More than 400 of those rescued from the rubble died later from their injuries.

France and Denmark join UK in meat dispute

Continued from page 1

Clayton Yeutter, who will be the US Secretary for Agriculture in the new Bush Administration, and was said to be very anxious to lower the dispute's temperature.

His colleague, Mr Alan Clark, the Minister for Trade, described the situation as "potentially extremely serious", and called for it to be settled by a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade adjudication.

Labour's Mr George Foulkes said the Government should exploit its "much-valued special relationship" with the US to prevent "this initial skirmish" from becoming an all-out trade war.

Further efforts to prevent a

trade war will be made at a meeting of US and EEC officials early in the New Year. Washington officials say they are determined to defuse the potential crisis, and appear confident of some success.

Mr Leon Brittan, the former Home Secretary, who begins his term as an EEC Commissioner tomorrow, is sure to be involved in Commission discussions on the row. Before leaving he told *The Times* that he did not regard himself as departing from the political scene.

In an interview on Page 12, he makes it plain that he intends to return to British politics, but that he will not be Mrs Thatcher's representative while he is in Brussels.

Bush pledges to punish the culprits

Continued from page 1

that investigators would also focus on the possibility that a criminal or individual plotted the bomb.

Mr Bush's remarks reflected the frustration felt in the Reagan Administration when it was unable to mount retaliatory strikes because of lack of evidence for terrorist attacks.

In was not until April 1986, that it became satisfied that Colonel Gaddafi was linked to an atrocity against the United States, resulting in a bombing raid on Libya.

Mr Reagan, who is on holiday in California, has extended for a further six months US trade and eco-

nomic sanctions against Libya, accusing it of continuing to support international terrorism.

Neither the President nor any American officials have connected Libya to the Pan Am atrocity.

Mr Bush echoed the sense of frustration yesterday, saying that America would take action against those responsible "if you can ever find them".

In London, Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, yesterday called on Middle East governments to help in the search for those responsible for blowing up the Pan Am jet.

"We clearly want to have the maximum co-operation

from governments throughout the world, including governments in the Middle East", he said in an interview with the BBC Radio 4 programme *The World At One*.

His remark was the first public hint that the Government suspects that one of the many Middle East terrorist groups may be involved.

Sir Geoffrey was asked how an international investigation could be set up without some kind of new machinery.

His reply implicitly highlighted the contrast between the close co-operation which already exists between Western governments, and the much weaker links with some of the Arab, Asian and Third

World countries. The EEC's interior ministries exchange information on terrorism and drug smuggling through a forum called the Trevi Group, while the Summit Seven group (Canada, France, West Germany, Japan, Italy, the UK, and the US) have another forum.

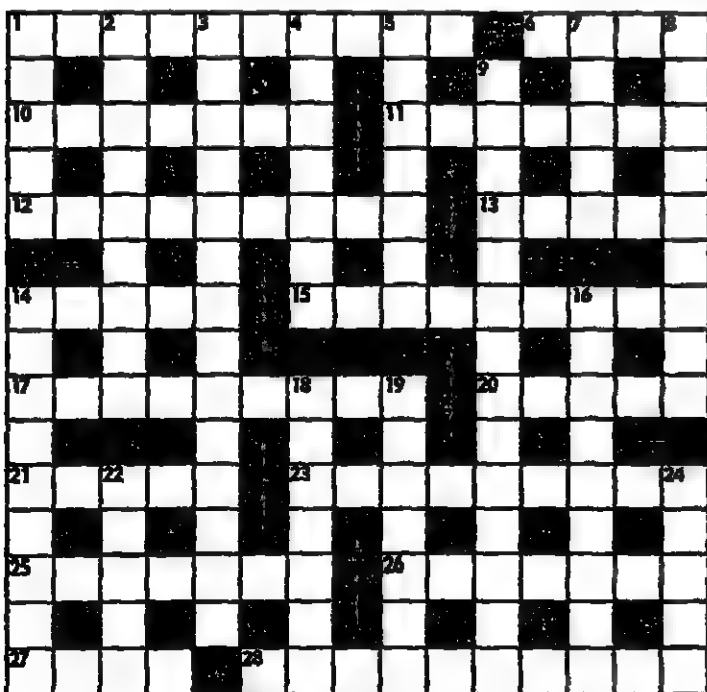
But there is no similar liaison with the Arab world.

He said: "The machinery, to a large extent, exists, because all the important countries have got their own investigative organizations. What is necessary beyond that is the willingness to have much greater international co-operation in the hunt for those responsible."

Hunt for jumbo jet saboteurs

Bush pledges to punish the culprits

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 17,866



- ACROSS**
- 1 Carry on to get record, just in time (4-5).
 - 6 Offensive enterprise (4).
 - 7 Centre of operations in war zone (7).
 - 11 Subject of one told by fisherman? (7).
 - 12 A maiden embraced by posher clubman's servant (3,6).
 - 13 European port rejects Britain's routine procedure (5).
 - 14 Asian tree associated with a city in India (5).
 - 15 Stop fighting - expecting ring come-back? (9).
 - 17 Aristocrat gives girl extra name (9).
 - 20 Wooden old actor needs new finale (5).
 - 21 Vehicles - some immediately pulled out (5).
 - 23 Fabric attached to house (apart from front) (9).
 - 25 Live broadcast within a month, for athletic event (7).
 - 26 Result of business folding out East (7).
 - 27 Deliver a judgment, in principle (4).
- DOWN**
- 2 One mark added to money scale (10).
 - 3 Strings or wind not loud initially (5).
 - 4 Tomb at sea if this is wrecked? (9).
 - 5 A mythical metal disguised in a calculating way (14).
 - 8 Put out call - was first there (7).
 - 9 Near sign directing hospital visitors? (7).
 - 10 Sort of second class degree found in Oxford for example (5).
 - 11 Man overcomes nuclear fallout, needing great effort (9).
 - 12 For strain, effective method of prognosis (7-7).
 - 14 Trim sort of suit for musical director (4,5).
 - 16 Indian relics, for example, a rani came out for (9).
 - 18 Had to have such a change? It's acute (7).
 - 19 Poet's fresh start (7).
 - 22 Apprentice cook (5).
 - 24 Leading member of party secured by rope, say (5).

Concise crossword, page 18

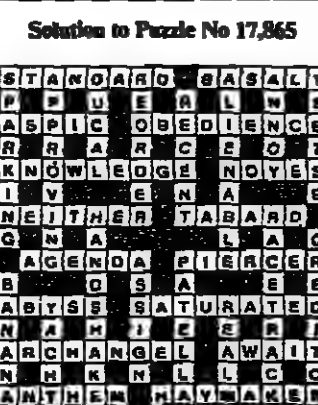
WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct?

By Philip Howard

- GOURDY**
a. Horse's swollen legs
b. A pink cucumber
c. The monetary unit of Java
- REBATO**
a. Medical direction: released
b. A discount
c. A stiff collar
- CRATCH**
a. A crib or manger
b. To set salmon
c. A basket graminet
- FUSTO**
a. A hock or whip
b. The Albanian lili
c. A unesco warlordist

Answers on page 18



WEATHER

Scotland will be showery with sunny spells in eastern parts. Rain will spread into Northern Ireland and parts of northern England before dying out. Wales and south-west England will be cloudy with sunshine inland. The remainder of England will stay dull and misty. Outlook: dry and mild with clear periods, but rain is likely in the North-west.

ABROAD

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Algeria	14-27	15-28	16-29	17-30	18-31	19-32
Algeria	15-28	16-29	17-30	18-31	19-32	20-33
Algeria	16-29	17-30	18-31	19-32	20-33	21-34
Algeria	17-30	18-31	19-32	20-33	21-34	22-35
Algeria	18-31	19-32	20-33	21-34	22-35	23-36
Algeria	19-32	20-33	21-34	22-35	23-36	24-37
Algeria	20-33	21-34	22-35	23-36	24-37	25-38
Algeria	21-34	22-35	23-36	24-37	25-38	26-39
Algeria	22-35	23-36	24-37	25-38	26-39	27-40
Algeria	23-36	24-37	25-38	26-39	27-40	28-41
Algeria	24-37	25-38	26-39	27-40	28-41	29-42
Algeria	25-38	26-39	27-40	28-41	29-42	30-43
Algeria	26-39	27-40	28-41	29-42	30-43	31-44
Algeria	27-40	28-41	29-42	30-43	31-44	32-45
Algeria	28-41	29-42	30-43	31-44	32-45	33-46
Algeria	29-42	30-43	31-44	32-45	33-46	34-47
Algeria	30-43	31-44	32-45	33-46	34-47	35-48
Algeria	31-44	32-45	33-46	34-47	35-48	36-49
Algeria	32-45	33-46	34-47	35-48	36-49	37-50
Algeria	33-46	34-47	35-48	36-49	37-50	38-51
Algeria	34-47	35-48	36-49	37-50	38-51	39-52
Algeria	35-48	36-49	37-50	38-51	39-52	40-53
Algeria	36-49	37-50	38-51	39-52	40-53	41-54
Algeria	37-50	38-51	39-52	40-53	41-54	42-55
Algeria	38-51	39-52	40-53	41-54	42-55	43-56
Algeria	39-52	40-53	41-54	42-55	43-56	44-57
Algeria	40-53	41-54	42-55	43-56	44-57	45-58
Algeria	41-54	42-55	43-56	44-57	45-58	46-59
Algeria	42-55	43-56	44-57	45-58	46-59	47-60
Algeria	43-56	44-57	45-58	46-59	47-60	48-61
Algeria	44-57	45-58	46-59	47-60	48-61	49-62
Algeria	45-58	46-59	47-60	48-61	49-62	50-63
Algeria	46-59	47-60	48-61	49-62	50-63	51-64
Algeria	47-60	48-61	49-62	50-63	51-64	52-65
Algeria	48-61	49-62	50-63	51-64	52-65	53-66
Algeria	49-62	50-63	51-64	52-65	53-66	54-67
Algeria	50-63	51-64	52-65	53-66	54-67	55-68
Algeria	51-64	52-65	53-66	54-67	55-68	56-69
Algeria	52-65	53-66	54-67	55-68	56-69	57-70
Algeria	53-66	54-67	55-68	56-69	57-70	58-71
Algeria	54-67	55-68	56-69	57-70	58-71	59-72
Algeria	55-68	56-69	57-70	58-71	59-72	60-73
Algeria	56-69	57-70	58-71	59-72	60-73	61-74
Algeria	57-70	58-71	59-72	60-73	61-74	62-75
Algeria	58-71	59-72	60-73	61-74	62-75	63-76
Algeria	59-72	60-73	61-74	62-75	63-76	64-77
Algeria	60-73	61-74	62-75	63-76	64-77	65-78
Algeria	61-74	62-75	63-76	64-77	65-78	66-79
Algeria	62-75	63-76	64-77	65-78	66-79	67-80
Algeria	63-76	64-77	65-78	66-79	67-80	68-81
Algeria	64-77	65-78	66-79	67-80	68-81	69-82
Algeria	65-78	66-79	67-80	68-81	69-82	70-83
Algeria	66-79	67-80	68-81	69-82	70-83	71-84
Algeria	67-80	68-81	69-82	70-83	71-84	72-85
Algeria	68-81	69-82	70-83	71-84	72-85	73-86
Algeria	69-82	70-83	71-84	72-85	73-86	74-87
Algeria	70-83	71-84	72-85	73-86	74-87	75-88
Algeria	71-84	72-85	73-86	74-87	75-88	76-89
Algeria	72-85	73-86	74-87	75-88	76-89	77-90
Algeria	73-86	74-87	75-88	76-89	77-90	78-91
Algeria	74-87	75-88	76-89	77-90	78-91	79-92
Algeria	75-88	76-89	77-90	78-91	79-92	80-93
Algeria	76-89	77-90	78-91	79-92	80-93	81-94
Algeria	77-90	78-91	79-92	80-93	81-94	82-95
Algeria	78-91	79-92	80-93	81-94	82-95	83-96
Algeria	79-92	80-93	81-94	82-95	83-96	84-97
Algeria	80-93	81-94	82-95	83-96	84-97	85-98
Algeria	81-94	82-95	83-96	84-97	85-98	86-99
Algeria	82-95	83-96	84-97	85-98	86-99	87-100
Algeria	83-96	84-97	85-98	86-99	87-100	88-101
Algeria	84-97	85-98	86-99	87-100	88-101	89-102
Algeria	85-98	86-99	87-100	88-101	89-102	90-103
Algeria	86-99	87-100	88-101	89-102	90-103	91-104
Algeria	87-100	88-101	89-102	90-103	91-104	92-105
Algeria	88-101	89-102	90-103	91-104	92-105	93-106
Algeria	89-102	90-103	91-104	92-105	93-106	94-107
Algeria	90-103	91-104	92-105	93-106	94-107	95-108
Algeria	91-104	92-105	93-106	94-107	95-108	96-109
Algeria	92-105	93-106	94-107	95-108	96-109	97-110
Algeria	93-106	94-107	95-108	96-109	97-110	98-111
Algeria	94-107	95-108	96-109	97-110	98-111	99-112
Algeria	95-108	96-109	97-110	98-111	99-112	100-113
Algeria	96-109	97-110	98-111	99-112	100-113	101-114
Algeria	97-110	98-111	99-112	100-113	101-114	102-115
Algeria	98-111	99-112	100-113	101-114	102-115	103-116
Algeria	99-112	100-113	101-114	102-115	103-116	104-117
Algeria	100-113	101-114	102-115	103-116	104-117	105-118
Algeria	101-114	102-115	103-116	104-117	105-118	106-119
Algeria	102-115	103-116	104-117	105-118	106-119	107-120
Algeria	103-116	104-117	105-118	106-119	107-120	108-121
Algeria	104-117	105-118	106-119	107-120	108-121	109-122
Algeria	105-118	106-119	107-120	108-121	109-122	110-123
Algeria	106-119	107-120	108-121	109-122	110-123	111-124
Algeria	107-120	108-121	109-122	110-123	111-124	112-125
Algeria	108-121	109-122	110-123	111-124	112-125	113-126
Algeria	109-122	110-123	111-124	112-125	113-126	114-127
Algeria	110-123	111-124	112-125	113-126	114-127	115-128
Algeria	111-124	112-125	113-126	114-127	115-128	116-129
Algeria	112-125	113-126	114-127	115-128	116-129	117-130
Algeria	113-126	114-127	115-128	116-129	117-130	118-131
Algeria	114-127	115-128	116-129	117-130	118-131	119-132
Algeria	115-128	116-129	117-130	118-131	119-132	120-133
Algeria	116-129	117-130	118-131	119-132	120-133	121-134
Algeria	117-130	118-131	119-132	120-133	121-134	122-135
Algeria	118-131	119-132	120-133	121-134	122-135	123-136
Algeria	119-132	120-133	121-134	122-135	123-136	124-137
Algeria	120-133	121-134	122-135	123-136	124-137	125-138
Algeria	121-134	122-135	123-136	124-137	125-138	126-139
Algeria	122-135	123-136	124-137	125-138	126-139	127-140
Algeria	123-136	124-137	125-138	126-139	127-140	128-141
Algeria	124-137	125-138	126-139	127-140	128-141	129-142
Algeria	125-138	126-139	127-140	128-141	129-142	130-143
Algeria	126-139	127-140	128-141	129-142	130-143	131-144
Algeria	127-140	128-141	129-142	130-143	131-144	132-145
Algeria	128-141	129-142	130-143	131-144	132-145	133-146
Algeria	129-142	130-143	131-144	132-145	133-146	134-147
Algeria	130-143	131-144	132-145	133-146	134-147	135-148
Algeria	131-144	132-145	133-146	134-147	135-148	136-149
Algeria	132-145	133-146	134-147	135-148	136-149	137-150
Algeria	133-146	134-147	135-148	136-149	137-150	138-151
Algeria	134-147	135-148	136-149	137-150	138-151	139-152
Algeria	135-148	136-149	137-150	138-151	139-152	140-153
Algeria	136-149	137-150	138-151	139-152	140-153	141-154
Algeria	137-150	138-151	139-152	140-153	141-154	142-155
Algeria	138-151	139-152	140-153	141-154	142-155	143-156
Algeria	139-152	140-153	141-154	142-155	143-156	144-157
Algeria	140-153	141-154	142-155	143-156	144-157	145-158
Algeria	141-154	142-155	143-156	144-157	145-158	146-159
Algeria	142-155	143-156	144-157	145-158	146-159	147-160
Algeria	143-156	144-157	145-158	146-159	147-160	148-161
Algeria	144-157	145-158	146-159	147-160	148-161	149-162
Algeria	145-158	146-159	147-160	148-161	149-162	150-163
Algeria	146-159	147-160	148-161	149-162	150-163	151-164
Algeria	147-160	148-161	149-162	150-163	151-164	152-165
Algeria	148-161	149-162	150-163	151-164	152-165	153-166
Algeria	149-162	150-163	151-164	152-165	153-166	154-167
Algeria	150-163	151-164	152-165	153-166	154-167	155-168
Algeria	151-164	152-165	153-166	154-167	155-168	156-169
Algeria	152-165	153-166	154-167	155-168	156-169	157-170
Algeria	153-166	154-167	155-168	156-169	157-170	158-171
Algeria	154-167	155-168	156-169	157-170	158-171	159-172
Algeria	155-168	156-169	157-170	158-171	159-172	160-173
Algeria	156-169	157-170	158-171	159-172	160-173	161-174
Algeria	157-170	158-171	159-172	160-173	161-174	162-175
Algeria	158-171	159-172	160-173	161-174	162-175	163-176
Algeria	159-172	160-173	161-174	162-175	163-176	164-177
Algeria	160-173	161-174	162-175	163-176	164-177	165-178
Algeria	161-174	162-175	163-176	164-177	165-178	166-179
Algeria	162-175	163-176	164-177	165-178	166-179	167-180
Algeria	163-176	164-177	165-178	166-179	167-180	168-181
Algeria	164-177	165-178	166-179	167-180	168-181	169-182
Algeria	165-178	166-179	167-180	168-181	169-182	170-183
Algeria	166-179	167-180	168-181	169-182	170-183	171-184
Algeria	167-180	168-181	169-182	170-183	171-184	172-185
Algeria	168-181	169-182	170-183	171-184	172-185	173-186
Algeria	169-182	170-183	171-184	172-185	173-186	174-187
Algeria	170-183	171-184	172-185	173-186	174-187	175-188
Algeria	171-184	172-185	173-186	174-187	175-188	

Estate agents will be the main victims of higher interest rates

By David Smith, Economics Correspondent

The housing boom may be over but falling house prices are highly unlikely in any part of the country.

And, while home-owners will find it harder in 1989, the effects of the end of the boom will be felt most keenly by estate agents, for whom the good years, for the time being at least, have finished.

That, at least, is the message from a number of end-of-year assessments of housing market prospects, admittedly from organizations which may have an interest in avoiding a general fall in house prices.

Fears of overkill on interest rates by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the clear threat that rates will be raised further if necessary, have sent shudders throughout the entire housing market.

Some City economists have argued that house prices need to fall, perhaps by as much as 20 per cent, in order to kill the inflationary psychology in the economy.

An analysis by American Express, the financial services group which does not operate in the mortgage market in Britain, suggested that a 14 per cent fall in house prices is possible by 1990, in order to restore the long-term ratio of house prices to incomes.

However, this view of falling house prices is challenged by other forecasters. Mr Ian Beauchamp, economist at Hambros, the merchant bank

which has its own estate agency arm, says that predictions of falling house prices are based on a misunderstanding of the way the housing market works.

"In particular, they fail to recognize the downward rigidity of nominal house prices, the importance of forced selling and the crucial role of turnover."

In Hambros' view, turnover is likely to be the biggest casualty of the Chancellor's squeeze on the housing market, while prices will hold up.

"A rise in mortgage rates will result in a fall in turnover," says Mr Beauchamp. "This fall may produce some weakness in house prices but because of the discretionary nature of most housing transactions and the cost and inconvenience of moving in and out of the owner-occupied sector, widespread selling does not usually take place to force house prices down to market-clearing levels."

Hambros expects the rise in house prices to slow to 5 per cent in 1989, less than the general rate of inflation. As a result, there will be a small fall in real house prices. But by far the biggest effect is on turnover. It forecasts a 16.3 per cent fall in house sales in 1989, enough to seriously dent estate agents' earnings.

The Halifax Building Society, Britain's largest, is in broad agreement with this



	House Prices	Turnover
	Nominal	Real
1986	14.9	11.1
1987	15.9	11.2
1988	24.7	18.9
1989	5.0	-1.2
1990	6.0	-2.1

Source: Hambros Economic Bulletin, December 1988.

assessment. Its forecast has the rise in house prices coming down to 5 per cent by the end of 1989, from a 1988 high of nearly 35 per cent.

It believes house prices will only fall in the event of forced selling by over-stretched home-buyers, and that in spite

of recent and prospective mortgage rate increases, this point has not yet been reached.

Mr Jim Birrell, the chief executive of the Halifax, says that most borrowers will be able to cope with higher mortgage payments, although

any further interest rate rises could change this situation.

It regards the dampening down of activity in the housing market as a demonstration that the Chancellor has succeeded in at least one aspect of his tightening of policy.

The Halifax recognizes that house prices could become more flexible if the Government succeeds in stimulating the private rental market, which would then present a serious alternative to owner-occupation. But this will not happen in time to have an effect on house prices in 1989.

The two main influences on house prices are income growth and cost of finance. Although average earnings are increasing by 9 per cent or more a year, growth in real income will be squeezed by higher prices and by the absence of sizeable cuts in personal taxation in the next Budget.

Meanwhile, 1988 is drawing to a close with interest rate sentiment gloomy. With inflation set to touch 8 per cent in early 1989, most economists see little scope for any early base rate cut, and see a real danger of a rise in rates to 14 per cent, if sterling comes under pressure.

Mr Gary Styles, senior economist at the Halifax, says the housing market could revive if the usual spring upturn in activity coincides with a reduction in interest rates — and lower base rates have become a Budget tradition.

Investment crucial says CBI president

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

Sir Trevor Holdsworth, president of the Confederation of British Industry, emphasized the need to maintain industrial investment in a New Year message to business leaders.

He said that while the Chancellor's measures to dampen demand seemed to be working the challenge was to manage the side effects of high interest rates so that the momentum of investment was sustained.

Sir Trevor added: "The Government can help by cutting corporate taxation and controlling those other centrally-imposed costs, like rates and electricity prices, which diminish the funds available for investment."

He said a CBI task force was studying vocational education and training to see how skill

shortages could be ended. Sir Trevor added: "Investment in people is particularly important. We must have a workforce — which is at least a skillforce — which is at least as well trained as those of our overseas rivals."

Productivity in UK manufacturing has been rising faster than in most other leading industrial countries in the last year or two. But we need to keep this up because we are still badly behind the United States, Japan and West Germany in our overall productive efficiency."

Sir Trevor also called for investment in rail and road links between industrial areas and large ports to minimize delays and to make costs competitive. He said that industry and Government needed to work together.

BBA buys Pegasus for £1.2m

By Our City Staff

British Bloodstock Agency is acquiring Pegasus Insurance Services, a European bloodstock insurance agency, for about £1.2 million, of which £225,000 will be paid in cash, 10 per cent in loan notes, and £529,268 in new shares.

The acquisition will be enhanced by the simultaneous acquisition of the bloodstock insurance business of Olympic Bloodstock, which is complementary to those of Pegasus and BBA. For 1987 the adjusted combined pre-tax profits of Pegasus and Olympic were £140,000.

Mr Peter Bickmore, managing director and leading shareholder of Pegasus, will join the BBA board and manage the bloodstock insurance business of the enlarged group under an agreement with his company, Bickmore Management.

UK oil output may be hit for months

By David Young, Energy Correspondent

Shell, the oil producer, has confirmed that it may be many months before its Fulmar and Auk platforms, and the nearby Britoil Clyde platform will be back into full production.

Medora, the storage tanker which holds the 200,000 barrels produced each day from the three fields, broke its moorings on Christmas Eve and is now in Stavanger, Norway, for repairs.

While it was drifting it crossed the Ekofisk oil pipeline which was closed as a precautionary measure.

Shell said yesterday that underwater video films show that the mooring tower which connected the Medora to the seabed production pipelines and valves from the three platforms, broke free following fractures in three of the

four latching plates which held it on to a seabed mounting plate. Divers have been sent down to check that the oil valves on the seabed are fully closed.

Shell said yesterday that the cause of the fractures is not yet known, but the plate on the seabed will be brought to the surface for detailed examination and the mooring tower, which is still attached to the Medora, will also be examined.

The three platforms account for about 10 per cent of the total crude oil output in the British sector of the North Sea of 2.1 million barrels a day. The Medora had about 64,000 tonnes of oil in store when she broke free and arrangements are now being made to pump that oil into smaller tankers in Norway.

UK miracle puts its feet up for a fortnight

COMMENT

Britain's productivity miracle is entitled to put its feet up for a couple of weeks over Christmas. That, at least, appears to be the official view of the silent factories, half-empty offices and idle building sites which have formed the commercial and industrial landscape since December 23.

Not that ministers are in any position to lecture anyone about long Christmas holidays. Treasury ministers, in common with their colleagues from other departments, have been enjoying a two-week break. Westminster and Whitehall have about as much life in them at this time of year as the average turkey.

Whenever comparisons are made between British holidays and those elsewhere, the paucity of public holidays here, in comparison with most of Europe, is usually the first response. Britain has eight public holidays a year, while the good people of Bavaria have as many as 18 — counting saints' days as well as national holidays. And is British productivity up to Bavarian standards? Not by a long way.

Similarly, the August shut-down in France is legendary, and appears to be stretching itself into late July and early September. In Britain, in contrast, officials at the Central Statistical Office — in addition to their other problems — had difficulty disentangling seasonal trends in manufacturing output over the summer.

because so many factories stayed open during the normal holiday closure period.

So, should we be worried about the fact that the boom year of 1988 is closing with a prolonged and almighty blow-out? Probably not, unless you are the Chancellor of the Exchequer and worried about the strength of consumer spending.

The Bank of England's weekly return, published yesterday, pointed to a growth rate of a little above 8 per cent in narrow money, M0, in December — indicating that there was plenty of pep in retail sales in the run-up to Christmas.

When people are safely locked up in their offices and factories, they cannot easily be spending money in the shops. A glance around any high street this week shows the familiar seasonal sight of grown men with hand-dog expressions on their faces and the beginnings of a severe pain in the wallet. There they go, loaded up with plastic carrier bags, and asking their wives whether they really need another hostess trolley in the house.

It may all end in tears. Reality — such as the National Westminster and Woolwich mortgage rate increases announced yesterday — has a nasty habit of re-imposing itself when life returns to normal. In the meantime, the thought of silent factories and bustling high streets may be a sobering one for the Chancellor.

New year, old oil problem

On New Year's Day the new output quota system adopted by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries comes into operation with the aim of sending the world oil price upwards, if not to the heady levels above \$30 a barrel of three years ago at least to the \$18-a-barrel mark.

The \$18 level is one which all the main producing nations, oil companies and users of oil have agreed they are comfortable with. If it can be achieved then the companies will breathe a collective sigh of relief and the investors should start to see a better return.

No nation will be more anxious to see that target reached than Kuwait. It stands to gain on three points. As the architect of much of Opec's recent policy it will see its strategy and proposals being demonstrated as successful and sensible. It stands to see its own oil revenues increase and its stands to see the value of its investment in BP rise.

Which is the most important issue to Kuwait is debatable, but for BP the achievement of the third point is vital.

A higher BP price, ideally at about the 280p mark, would allow Kuwait to divest its holding in BP to the level required by the Department of Trade and Industry without too much loss of profit or face.

BP would not have to step in and buy back its own shares — a move which has always been an option, but which would require a resolution approved by shareholders. BP has been advised that such a scheme would have certain advantages, but there are BP board members who would approve such a scheme only if there was no other solution in sight. BP does not like having Kuwait as such a large shareholder, but it is a company which is fundamentally expansionist and buying its own shares does not fit that policy.

For that reason, it is likely that 1989 will see a series of detailed presentations around the world by BP, spelling out its plans and its management's determination to concentrate on its core profitable businesses.

While Kuwait may feel annoyed that it has not been treated fairly by the British Government over the issue, at least it will not be able to accuse BP of acting in the same way. By working hard to satisfy its largest shareholder BP will be working for the benefit of its other shareholders, too. But unless Kuwait gives some indication of its wishes soon, BP shares will remain under threat of a massive new supply on to the market.

And other majors like Shell are looking at least as attractive on fundamentals.

Goldsmith sells to workers for \$35m

Sir James Goldsmith's Crown Zellerbach Corp has completed the sale of Omak Wood products, a lumber mill in the state of Washington to a union-led group of employees for \$35 million (£19.5 million).

The sale represents the first time a union has successfully won a desirable company at auction, according to bankers and professionals who promote employee ownership in the US.

Of the \$6 billion in leveraged employee stock ownership plans (Esops) studied this year by the National Center for Employee Ownership in America, few have been initiated by unions.

Mr Corey Rosen, executive director of the centre, said: "The unions until recently have taken a sceptical attitude toward employee ownership with the exception of steelworkers. We're seeing in Omak what might be the

beginning for some unions of a new strategy that they can get involved in — this process of buying and selling companies rather than sitting around and letting others buy them."

In exchange for an immediate, 10 per cent across-the-board pay cut, the Omak employees will end up with 57.5 per cent of the equity — 59 per cent if they meet five-year financial targets. Sir James will keep 10 per cent of

the equity and the company's management will be eligible for another 1 per cent. The balance will go to the union's investment bankers at Drexel Burnham Lambert and the high-yield bond holders who are expected to lend half of the \$30 million needed to cover the purchase price and working capital needs.

The mill expects to earn \$10 million this year before interest and taxes on sales of \$70 million, union advisers said.

Prudential in £46m purchase

The Prudential is to boost its Australasian interests by buying the loss-making Australian and New Zealand operations of Aetna Life and Casualty, the US group, for up to £46.7 million. The acquisition is being made through the Prudential's life fund.

Joining the two groups will make Prudential the fifth largest life assurance group in Australia measured by premium income, and the sixth in terms of assets under management.

In the year to end-September, Aetna's interests lost Aus\$2.6 million (£1.24 million) on net assets of Aus\$6.7 million. By contrast, Prudential's Australasian operations made profits of £6.5 million out of total group pre-tax profits of £242 million.

Mr Brian Medhurst, managing director of Prudential's international division, said putting the two groups together would give considerable economies of scale to the benefit of policyholders and investors.

Aetna is to keep some fund management and health insurance businesses, and the purchase price will be adjusted for net assets retained.

Carless query

The board of Carless has asked the management of Kelt Energy to clarify "a number of outstanding matters" and has told shareholders it will write to them with advice shortly. Kelt has more than 70 per cent of Carless and has declared its £208 million bid for the company wholly unconditional. The bid is open until January 12 and Carless is likely to meet the Kelt management team early next week.

Maxiprint loss

Maxiprint, quoted on the Unlisted Securities Market, slipped into the red in the year to end-May after a four-month delay in the start of production of its new Ten-Eight daylight enlargement machine. The group showed a pre-tax loss of £225,000 against a profit of £68,000 previously.

AT&T makes 'dumping' complaint

Washington — The American Telephone and Telegraph Company has asked the United States government to investigate its complaint that companies in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are "dumping" telephone equipment in the US at unfair prices.

The companies named in the complaint are Hasegawa, Iwatsu, Matsushita, Meisei, Nakayo, Nitsuko, Tamura and Toshiba, of Japan; Gold Star, OPC and Samsung, of South Korea; and Sun Moon Star, of Taiwan.

For its complaint to succeed, AT&T must demonstrate that the dumping occurred and that it experienced "material injury." If the complaint is accepted the foreign companies' products could face punitive duties as they enter the country. According to the US company, South Korea's market share has jumped from 3.7 per cent to 16.4 per cent since 1985 and that of Japan from 36 per cent to 38 per cent. (New York Times)

Bouygues versus Maxwell

Francis Bouygues, the French construction king, whose subsidiary Saur Water Services is currently involved in a bid for Eastbourne Water, has been involved in a heated exchange of words with our very own Robert Maxwell. For Maxwell is the second largest shareholder in TFI, the leading French television channel, and it was Bouygues who led the consortium which bought TFI two years ago. The boardroom dispute, over who will head TFI, apparently so disillusioned Bouygues that he has now turned his attention back to the Channel Tunnel. At the centre of the row is Patrick Le Lay, Bouygues' poker-faced right-hand man, to whom Bouygues gave the top TFI job in the autumn. Maxwell was not pleased by the choice. Bouygues, aged 66, has just built the world's largest mosque for the King of Morocco in Casablanca, and he is now adding an airport in Agadir. In the Far East, he is involved in talks about building a bridge in Hong Kong. Perhaps the two great men are too alike.

On the scent

The 11-month French trade figures, which show a deficit of £3.1 billion, may be bad (although not as bad as the British), but the luxury sector is nevertheless booming. Ministerial and presidential forays to Eastern Europe have increasingly been followed up by trade visits by marketers of luxury goods — instead of the

THE TIMES PARIS DIARY

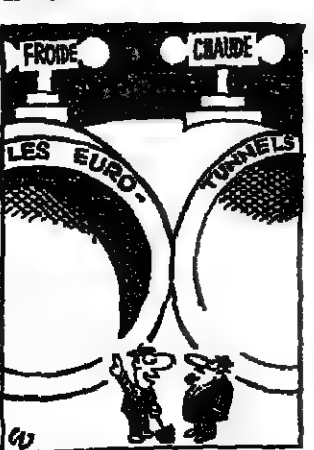
Departure of her nibs

Francine Gomez, once chairman of Waterman UK, the luxury pen-maker, has apparently stormed out of the company's boardroom after a row with Gillette, its new owner. Gillette's "crime," she tells me, was to go down-market and attempt to market the superior pens alongside inferior American models. An angry letter from a US distributor (of all people) saying

"Shame on you" seems to have provided the impetus to quit before the marketing ploy spread to Italy and the UK. Miss Gomez, the daughter of a former Waterman's boss and these days married to an advertising man, says she now plans to run a luxury hotel, buy some companies and advise American companies coming to Europe. *Avant le petit déjeuner?*

New crop

Perhaps the secret of French champagne is out. The Texas-French partnership, involving Total-Campagne Francaise des Petroles and a subsidiary of the London-quoted Dallas group Trion Europe, has found oil on the edge of Champagne country. However, one Texan said that the best fields were unfortunately "out of reach" — they are directly beneath the champagne vineyards and, nearer to Paris, under the mini-Versailles otherwise known as the Chateau Vaux-le-Vicomte.



"We are also buying up their water companies"

Poms fright

In the deathless words of Napoleon Bonaparte — who lived to regret them — Britain has always been a nation of shopkeepers. And now it is teaching the French something about the art of running successful small businesses. It is well known that Hamilton's fish and chip shop is the talk of the newly fashionable Bastille quarter, but elsewhere interior decorator Tom O'Neill has become the man of the moment for the new "restoration look" in the fashionable 16th arrondissement, as well as in Desauville, where Britons are buying properties alongside Parisians. O'Neill, who established his reputation in London's Fulham before crossing the Channel, ascribes the success of British decorators to the quality of their work, but adds that "affability and reliability also have a lot to do with it."

In fact, there are so many affable and reliable Britons in Paris these days that journalist Roger Boardwood is launching a weekly paper specially catering for them. "A quarter of a million people in Paris and the Ile de France speak English on a regular basis," he reckons. However, those who speak French on a regular basis are not taking the English invasion lying down. This week *Le Monde*, the French equivalent of *The Times*, has carried a series of letters from resentful Parisians attacking what they described as "Anglomaniacism." Perhaps they should write to Boardwood's *Gazette* instead.

Alan Tillier

EXCLUSIVE DIARY OFFER

● 14 pages of information on and addresses of universities, polytechnics and Scottish central institutions as well as research councils, trade unions and Government, local authority and employers' organisations. Higher Education in Europe and the Commonwealth.

● Easy-to-read week-to-a-page diary.

● Inter-city guide.

● London underground map.

● Motorway map.

The 1989 edition of the THES pocket diary is now available at a price of £2.99 (inc p.&p.). For your diary, send a cheque/postal order for £2.99 (made payable to The Times Supplements) to Liz Smith Diary Offer, The Times Higher Education Supplement, Priory House, St. John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. Do not forget to send your name and address with your order.

Gains extended

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (aa) denotes Alpha Stocks.

Portfolio
PLUS
Accumulator
© Times Newspaper Limited
DAILY DIVIDEND 24.000
Claims required for \$1 points
ACCUMULATOR 384.000
Claims better than \$1 points
Claimants should ring 6254-53372

483	229	BAT Inc	4.6					
490	129	PJ Corpn	2.6	+2	24.0	5.3	8.4	
496	305	Richman Tr (st)	2.8	+2	14.0	3.5	9.3	

● Ex dividend a Ex all b Forecast dividend c Interim
 payment paid d Price at suspension g Dividend and
 Forecast earnings h Ex other i Ex rights j Ex scrip or
 share split k Tax-free No significant data.

204	Parsons	227	250	+2	12.4	3.4	9.0
42	AK Shagwell	42	45	+3	3.1	7.8	19.5
413	Jackson (Lansing)	130	135	+5	12.3	8.3	7.4
130	Wing & Wilcoxon	256	300	+44	18.7	9.3	12.0
256	Wormwood (Burlington)	324	325	+1	15.6	8.1	10.0
324	Loyola (Ill.)	39	42	+3	2.5	8.1	10.0
39	Long Scott Bk	415	414	-1	26.0	8.8	10.0
415	Midland	292	297	+5	14.5	4.9	27.0
292	Worship (Knoxville)	512	513	+1	33.7	8.8	9.0
512	Long Scott Bk	512	513	+1	33.7	8.8	9.0
513	West Point (PA)	367					

198	145	Bowditch	160	160	+5	4.5	27	11.6
199	145	Immunity Security	160	160	+5	5.0	28	11.1
200	145	Immunity Trust	160	160	+5	5.0	28	11.1
201	145	Judge (AI) "A"	21	21	-	6.3	74	12.7
202	145	Cable Wireless (can)	215	215	+4	9.5	25	19.0
203	145	Cambridge Univ	222	222	-	11.7	52	11.4
204	145	Cambridge Inst	43	46	+	1.1	24	14.8
205	145	Canal	52	58	+	1.1	24	14.8
206	145	Cry Elect	169	169	+	4.4	27	11.6
207	181	Oxytel	192	196	+4	6.0	6.0	5.8
208	181	Dynalene	198	198	+	1.6	14	42.6
209	181	DIT Worm	198	123	-	5.7	51	12.3
210	75	Dale Elec						

[illegible]

194	200			200	201			152	4	119
194	125	T & B Ind		164	183			116	73	78
231	284	T		209	371		45	150	41	13
194	128	TW		169	173					
191	126	TW		168	183			147h	94	64
192	25	Teach	Com	117h						
39	17	Taliesin		12						286
191	126	Taliesin		162	167			63	43	52.1
194	120	Taliesin		156	165		+0.3h	40.3	17	24.1
350	252	Taliesin		201	205			45	17	25.5
350	252	Taliesin		201	205			45	17	25.5
258	184	Taliesin		205	208		+4	21	23	19.5
								60	29	34

197	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
198	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
199	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
200	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
201	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
202	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
203	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
204	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
205	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
206	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
207	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
208	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
209	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
210	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
211	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
212	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
213	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
214	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
215	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
216	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
217	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
218	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
219	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
220	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
221	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
222	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
223	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
224	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
225	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
226	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
227	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
228	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
229	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
230	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
231	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
232	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
233	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
234	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
235	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
236	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
237	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
238	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
239	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
240	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
241	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
242	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
243	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
244	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
245	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
246	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000
247	USA	150	1000	150	1000	150	1000

483	229	BAT Inc	4.6					
490	129	PJ Corpn	2.6	+2	24.0	5.3	8.4	
496	305	Richman Tr (st)	2.8	+2	14.0	3.5	9.3	

● Ex dividend a Ex all b Forecast dividend c Interim
 payment paid d Price at suspension g Dividend and
 Forecast earnings h Ex other i Ex rights j Ex scrip or
 share split k Tax-free No significant data.

Queen's Bench Divisional Court

Water authority can buy statutory company

Regina v Southern Water Authority and Another, Ex parte Water Companies Association and Others
Before Lord Justice Parker and Mr Justice Henry
[Judgment December 21]

No broad principle could be derived from the relevant legislation of an intention to keep sacrosanct the operational independence of the 28 statutory water companies which survived the enactment of the Water Act 1973. Indeed there was no reason why a water authority could not acquire control of a statutory water company — provided the safeguards contained in section 9 of the Water Act 1945 were not avoided.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held, in a reserved judgment, dismissing applications by the Water Companies Association, West Kent Water Company, the Eastbourne Waterworks Company, Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company and Sunderland & South Shields Water Company, by way of judicial review, for (i) a declaration that the purchase and holding of shares in a statutory water company by a water authority was beyond the powers of the water authority; (ii) a declaration that the exercise by a water authority of voting rights attaching to such shares, in such a manner as to influence the management or control of that company, was beyond the powers of that authority; (iii) an order that each of the respondent authorities dispose of such shares in the applicants as they held.

Mr Robert Wright, QC and Mr David Chivers for the applicants; Lord Justice Parker, QC and Mr Andrew Kozlowski for the Southern Water Authority; Mr Alan Moses for Northumbrian Water Authority.

MR JUSTICE HENRY said

that prior to 1973 responsibility for the supply of water in England and Wales lay with 183 separate statutory water undertakers — among which had been the 28 statutory water companies which comprised the first-named applicant, accounting for the supply of some 25 per cent of the nation's fresh water.

Other functions in relation to water had been the responsibility of bodies such as river authorities and sewerage boards.

The Water Act 1973 had established 10 new regional water authorities with functions extending beyond the supply of water. But although it provided by section 1(1)(a) that it should be the duty of a water authority to supply water within its area, section 12(1) provided that where its area included the whole or part of the limits of supply of a statutory company, it should discharge its duties in relation to that company.

The evidence before the court showed that a new interest in shares in the statutory companies had arisen since 1966, when the Monopolies and Mergers Commission had not regarded a company shareholding as being an attractive proposition.

The calm surface of the water industry had been disturbed by the foreboding privatization of the water authority and the fact that French water companies were buying up statutory companies.

The 1973 Act was silent on the authorities' power to purchase shares, whether in the company or otherwise. It was on ground that their general powers might only be used to promote (and not to thwart) the policy and object of the Act — see *Padfield v Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food* (1968) AC 997.

The basis of the companies' case was that the clear scheme of the 1973 Act (as amended by the Water Act 1983) was that the

authorities and the companies should be separate and independent bodies; so any shareholding by the former in the latter, undermining that separateness and independence, would thwart the policy of the Act.

By way of example, Southern Water Authority, having failed to discontinue its shareholding in West Kent Company (within their area), at a time when that authority held no shares in it, from merging with the East Surrey Company (outside it), had, without notifying the West Kent Company, purchased 14.65 per cent of its shares through nominees, who had at the ill-attended shareholders' meeting decisively cast those votes against the merger.

Had the merger been then approved, the companies concerned would have had to file the draft merger order with the minister, or notice to the authority, who, if they objected, could have required the minister to hold a local inquiry and to go through special parliamentary procedure.

All that had been avoided: the companies' wish had been defeated by the Trojan horse of the authority's shareholding in it.

The companies' case was largely founded on the minister's powers, under section 12(5) of the 1973 Act, to resolve disputes between the authority and a company in relation to:

- (1) to the original arrangements made between them (a) as to the management, or operation of sources of supply; (b) the supply of water in bulk; or to the company, or to the company's charges for the supply of water; or
- (2) to any later variation of them.

But the evidence showed that in the 14 years since the arrangements had been made, the only variation had been formal, no dispute over any proposed variation of arrangements, which had proved sensible, had ever taken place.

Section 12(6) guarded the company against any arrangement obliging it to fix its charges at a level to endanger its ability to provide a reasonable return on its paid-up capital, and if an authority were to use its voting rights to impose a company's rights to impose a company's charges scheme which would offend that subsection, such use would clearly be unlawful, as thwarting the purpose of the Act.

But his Lordship could detect no threat to the independence of the companies, or any future variation of arrangements made for the purpose of section 12 of the 1973 Act.

Further, section 12(9), by way of amendment to section 13 of the 1945 Act, gave the authority new default powers: so, to put the matter at its lowest, Parliament was prepared to contemplate the authority controlling the company when in unremedied default of its water supply function.

And section 9 of the 1945 Act showed that that such a company was prepared to contemplate control by the authority of the company in circumstances short of unremedied default.

It had been a potential merger under that section which the Southern Water Authority had blocked. The companies' case, as described above, was that their shareholding was unlawful, because by its action it had thwarted the purpose of the Act, that such a merger should be permitted — even if opposed by the authority — if it could duly satisfy both the minister and Parliament.

In summary, the scheme of the legislation seemed to be:

- 1 The companies had been deliberately preserved as separate entities.
- 2 Recognition that an overlap of powers and responsibilities created potential for disagreement, resulting in the authorities being given considerable powers of control over the companies.

3 In the event of default, the authority could as a last resort take over the company's functions.

4 Short of such default, there were several ways in which the authority could merge with the company.

5 The only specific protection given to the companies by statute was that they should not be obliged to fix their charges at a level which would endanger their ability to provide a reasonable return on capital.

On that statutory scheme, his Lordship could detect no broad principle of an intention to keep sacrosanct the operational independence of the companies; indeed, he did not see why an authority could not acquire control of a company, provided the safeguards of ministerial approval and control, laid down in section 9 of the Water Act 1945, were not avoided.

The fact that power obtained through share purchase could be abused did not make either the purchase of shares or the use of their voting rights unlawful without the need for further inquiry.

There were likely to be many circumstances in which such purchase and use might properly be regarded by the authority as calculated to facilitate, or be necessary to, the discharge of their statutory functions.

His Lordship would refuse to make the declarations and the order applied for. The authorities could not avoid any statutory restrictions affecting their relationship with the companies, either by acquiring shares in them or by use of voting rights in such shares; but there was no need to make a declaration in such terms, as its implicit principle had never been challenged.

Lord Justice Parker agreed.
Solicitors: Beachcroft, Stanleys, Herbert Smith; McKenna & Co.

'Reorganization' includes share capital increase

Dunstan (Inspector of Taxes) v Young, Austen & Young Ltd
Before Lord Justice Lloyd, Lord Justice Balcombe and Sir George Waller
[Judgment December 19]

Properly construed, the phrase "reorganization of a company's share capital" in paragraph 4 of Schedule 7 (Capital Gains Miscellaneous Rules) to the Finance Act 1965 covered the increase in a company's share capital and the allotment of the new shares to its parent company for cash.

Thus, in computing capital gains chargeable to corporation tax, such transactions had the effect of avoiding the provisions of section 22(4) of the 1965 Act in relation to assets acquired otherwise than by way of a bargain made at arm's length.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing an appeal by the taxpayer company, Young, Austen & Young Ltd, from a decision of Mr Justice Warner (The Times October 20, 1987; 1987 STC 192) that the company's share capital had been increased by the Crown from a determination of a special commissioner who had allowed the company's appeal against a corporation tax assessment for its accounting period to September 1979.

The Crown was refused leave to appeal to the House of Lords. In 1977, before becoming a member of the Tribunal for the House of Lords, the taxpayer company acquired for £16,000 the 1000 shares of £1 each in Young, Austen & Young Ltd. One of those shares was registered in the name of another Trafalgar House company and the remainder in the taxpayer company's name.

Y Ltd had paid and incurred debts of some £200,000 with the taxpayer company. It was determined that the company had sold after its indebtedness had been eliminated from its balance sheet.

Thus on June 12, 1979 Y Ltd increased its share capital by the creation of 200,000 new ordinary £1 shares ranking *pari passu* with its existing shares.

The taxpayer company then took up those new shares for cash at par and received £200,000 back in respect of the debts. Y Ltd was thereafter sold for £38,000.

The taxpayer company claimed a loss on the sale on the basis of the £16,000 plus £200,000. It contended that although the new shares were acquired by it "otherwise than by way of a bargain made at arm's length" and were thus deemed by section 22(4) of the 1965 Act to have been acquired for consideration equal to their market value — namely nothing — the increase in Y Ltd's share capital and the issue of the new shares constituted a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within paragraph 4.

The result was, it was said, that the £200,000 given by the taxpayer company for the new shares fell to be treated as having been given for the original 1,000 shares so that the effect of section 22(4) was sidestepped.

Paragraph 4 of Schedule 7 provides that it "(1) ... shall apply in relation to any reorganization or reduction of a company's share capital; and ... (a) references to a company's share capital include ... (i) any case where persons are, whether for payment or not, allotted shares in or debentures of the company in respect of and in proportion to (or as nearly as may be in proportion to) their holdings of shares in the company; and (ii) any case where there are more than one class of shares and the rights attached to shares are altered ..."

[The reorganization provisions are now contained in sections 77 to 81 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979.]

Mr Andrew Thornhill, QC and Mr Jeremy Woolf for the taxpayer company; Mr Christopher McCull, QC, for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE BALCOMBE, giving the judgment of the court, said that the question before the commissioner was whether what was done on June 12, 1979 amounted to a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within the meaning of paragraph 4. The commissioner held that it did.

The Crown's appeal from that decision was allowed by Mr Justice Warner. A contention put forward by the Crown based on the principles in *Ross v Worsley* (1979) 1 WLR 1400, *Y Ltd v IRC* (1984) 1 WLR 1400 was rejected by the commissioner and had not been pursued.

The two paragraphs relied on (paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 or paragraph 5 of the appendix to Schedule 2) were found to be in the Schedule and the appendix and after the identification of local government bodies. They were intended to sweep up those types of bodies appearing above them on the list and each was therefore a reference to local government bodies.

Finally, many of the employees identified in the Schedule and appendix would be properly defined as public authorities. If so many specific employees had been included it seemed incredible that where continuity of employment was being constantly reviewed by both sides of the water industry the water authorities would have been forgotten.

Accordingly the Thames Water Authority did not fall within the 1983 Order as amended and the industrial tribunal's decision was upheld. The appeal was dismissed and leave to appeal granted.

Solicitors: Mr R. A. Latham.

eliminated from its balance sheet.

Thus on June 12, 1979 Y Ltd increased its share capital by the creation of 200,000 new ordinary £1 shares ranking *pari passu* with its existing shares.

The taxpayer company then took up those new shares for cash at par and received £200,000 back in respect of the debts. Y Ltd was thereafter sold for £38,000.

The taxpayer company claimed a loss on the sale on the basis of the £16,000 plus £200,000. It contended that although the new shares were acquired by it "otherwise than by way of a bargain made at arm's length" and were thus deemed by section 22(4) of the 1965 Act to have been acquired for consideration equal to their market value — namely nothing — the increase in Y Ltd's share capital and the issue of the new shares constituted a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within paragraph 4.

The result was, it was said, that the £200,000 given by the taxpayer company for the new shares fell to be treated as having been given for the original 1,000 shares so that the effect of section 22(4) was sidestepped.

Paragraph 4 of Schedule 7 provides that it "(1) ... shall apply in relation to any reorganization or reduction of a company's share capital; and ... (a) references to a company's share capital include ... (i) any case where persons are, whether for payment or not, allotted shares in or debentures of the company in respect of and in proportion to (or as nearly as may be in proportion to) their holdings of shares in the company; and (ii) any case where there are more than one class of shares and the rights attached to shares are altered ..."

[The reorganization provisions are now contained in sections 77 to 81 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979.]

Mr Andrew Thornhill, QC and Mr Jeremy Woolf for the taxpayer company; Mr Christopher McCull, QC, for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE BALCOMBE, giving the judgment of the court, said that the question before the commissioner was whether what was done on June 12, 1979 amounted to a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within the meaning of paragraph 4. The commissioner held that it did.

The Crown's appeal from that decision was allowed by Mr Justice Warner. A contention put forward by the Crown based on the principles in *Ross v Worsley* (1979) 1 WLR 1400, *Y Ltd v IRC* (1984) 1 WLR 1400 was rejected by the commissioner and had not been pursued.

The two paragraphs relied on (paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 or paragraph 5 of the appendix to Schedule 2) were found to be in the Schedule and the appendix and after the identification of local government bodies. They were intended to sweep up those types of bodies appearing above them on the list and each was therefore a reference to local government bodies.

Finally, many of the employees identified in the Schedule and appendix would be properly defined as public authorities. If so many specific employees had been included it seemed incredible that where continuity of employment was being constantly reviewed by both sides of the water industry the water authorities would have been forgotten.

Accordingly the Thames Water Authority did not fall within the 1983 Order as amended and the industrial tribunal's decision was upheld. The appeal was dismissed and leave to appeal granted.

Solicitors: Mr R. A. Latham.

eliminated from its balance sheet.

Thus on June 12, 1979 Y Ltd increased its share capital by the creation of 200,000 new ordinary £1 shares ranking *pari passu* with its existing shares.

The taxpayer company then took up those new shares for cash at par and received £200,000 back in respect of the debts. Y Ltd was thereafter sold for £38,000.

The taxpayer company claimed a loss on the sale on the basis of the £16,000 plus £200,000. It contended that although the new shares were acquired by it "otherwise than by way of a bargain made at arm's length" and were thus deemed by section 22(4) of the 1965 Act to have been acquired for consideration equal to their market value — namely nothing — the increase in Y Ltd's share capital and the issue of the new shares constituted a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within paragraph 4.

The result was, it was said, that the £200,000 given by the taxpayer company for the new shares fell to be treated as having been given for the original 1,000 shares so that the effect of section 22(4) was sidestepped.

Paragraph 4 of Schedule 7 provides that it "(1) ... shall apply in relation to any reorganization or reduction of a company's share capital; and ... (a) references to a company's share capital include ... (i) any case where persons are, whether for payment or not, allotted shares in or debentures of the company in respect of and in proportion to (or as nearly as may be in proportion to) their holdings of shares in the company; and (ii) any case where there are more than one class of shares and the rights attached to shares are altered ..."

[The reorganization provisions are now contained in sections 77 to 81 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979.]

Mr Andrew Thornhill, QC and Mr Jeremy Woolf for the taxpayer company; Mr Christopher McCull, QC, for the Crown.

LORD JUSTICE BALCOMBE, giving the judgment of the court, said that the question before the commissioner was whether what was done on June 12, 1979 amounted to a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within the meaning of paragraph 4. The commissioner held that it did.

The Crown's appeal from that decision was allowed by Mr Justice Warner. A contention put forward by the Crown based on the principles in *Ross v Worsley* (1979) 1 WLR 1400, *Y Ltd v IRC* (1984) 1 WLR 1400 was rejected by the commissioner and had not been pursued.

The two paragraphs relied on (paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 or paragraph 5 of the appendix to Schedule 2) were found to be in the Schedule and the appendix and after the identification of local government bodies. They were intended to sweep up those types of bodies appearing above them on the list and each was therefore a reference to local government bodies.

Finally, many of the employees identified in the Schedule and appendix would be properly defined as public authorities. If so many specific employees had been included it seemed incredible that where continuity of employment was being constantly reviewed by both sides of the water industry the water authorities would have been forgotten.

Accordingly the Thames Water Authority did not fall within the 1983 Order as amended and the industrial tribunal's decision was upheld. The appeal was dismissed and leave to appeal granted.

Solicitors: Mr R. A. Latham.

eliminated from its balance sheet.

Thus on June 12, 1979 Y Ltd increased its share capital by the creation of 200,000 new ordinary £1 shares ranking *pari passu* with its existing shares.

The taxpayer company then took up those new shares for cash at par and received £200,000 back in respect of the debts. Y Ltd was thereafter sold for £38,000.

The taxpayer company claimed a loss on the sale on the basis of the £16,000 plus £200,000. It contended that although the new shares were acquired by it "otherwise than by way of a bargain made at arm's length" and were thus deemed by section 22(4) of the 1965 Act to have been acquired for consideration equal to their market value — namely nothing — the increase in Y Ltd's share capital and the issue of the new shares constituted a "reorganization" of Y Ltd's share capital within paragraph 4.

The result was, it was said, that the £200,000 given by the taxpayer company for the new shares fell to be treated as having been given for the original 1,000 shares so that the effect of section 22(4) was sidestepped.

Paragraph 4 of Schedule 7 provides that it "(1) ... shall apply in relation to any reorganization or reduction of a company's share capital; and ... (a) references to a company's share capital include ... (i) any case where persons are, whether for payment or not, allotted shares in or debentures of the company in respect of and in proportion to (or as nearly as may be in proportion to) their holdings of shares in the company; and (ii) any case where there are more than one class of shares and the rights attached to shares are altered ..."

[The reorganization provisions are now contained in sections 77 to 81 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979.]

Mr Andrew Thornhill, QC and Mr Jeremy Woolf for the taxpayer company; Mr Christopher McCull, QC, for the Crown.

Eviction by council against its gipsy policy not unlawful

Regina v Avon County Council, Ex parte Ruxworthy
Before Mr Justice Rose
[Judgment December 14]

A county council which had a policy of non-harassment of gipsies did not act unlawfully in seeking to evict gipsies from an encampment on a public highway where there was evidence of substantial obstruction and damage to the highway.

Mr Justice Rose in the Queen's Bench Division, *inter alia*, dismissed an application by Mr Stephen Frederick Ruxworthy for a declaration that the Avon County Council acted unlawfully in serving a notice on Mr Ruxworthy and others on April 27, 1988, to remove caravans from Baichfield Lane, Westleigh, Avon.

Mr Peter Barrie for Mr Ruxworthy; Mr Jeremy Sullivan, QC and Mr Richard Humphreys for the council.

MR JUSTICE ROSE said that Baichfield Lane was a class 5 road leading to a farm; by a paddock gate it gave emergency access to the M4 motorway.

[His Lordship read affidavits and other materials indicating that for a long time Baichfield Lane had been used without complaint as a stopping-over place by small numbers of travellers, but that in recent years the numbers and the complaints had increased until in April 1988 there were 22 caravans on the site.]

Damage was then being done to the motorway fence and there was substantial obstruction of the highway, a sanitation problem and a danger of children, dogs and horses straying on to the motorway.

By section 6 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 the council had a

duty to provide adequate accommodation for gipsies residing in or resorting to its area. In *R v Secretary of State for the Environment, Ex parte Leech* (1987) 1 WLR 457, Mr Sullivan conceded that on that test (which he was bound to accept for present purposes) the council was in breach of the duty, on evidence which was before the court.

The council also had a duty under section 130 of the Highways Act 1980 to protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of highways for which it was responsible and to prevent as far as possible the obstruction of such highways.

The council had espoused a policy of not requiring gipsies on unauthorized encampments to move on unless it was necessary to do so on a number of stated grounds. The policy was based on a recognition by the council that an inadequate number of sites was provided for gipsies and on the *West Glamorgan* decision.

Mr Barrie contended that in view of that policy and the breach of section 6 of the 1968 Act, and because among other things it had not been shown that Mr Ruxworthy was a trespasser, the council's action was unlawful. He contended that the council had acted in breach of its duty to prevent as far as possible the obstruction of such highways.

The decision to evict was not unlawful. As to other relief sought, his Lordship would grant a declaration that Mr Ruxworthy was a gipsy within the meaning of section 16 of the 1968 Act.

Although that was conceded at a late stage, in the light of *Greenwich London Borough Council v Powell* (The Times December 12, 1988), it was right to grant a declaration.

There would also be a declaration that the council was in breach of its section 6 duty.

Solicitors: Parry Maclean, Bristol; Mr Raymond J. Wager, Bristol.

Wednesbury Corporation (1948) 1 KB 223 and **Pulford v Hillingdon London Borough Council** (1986) AC 484.

He relied on the *West Glamorgan* decision. *West Glamorgan* was a very different case; for example, the land there was private land owned by the local authority rather than a public highway.

Avon Council was aware of its obligation to provide sites and its shortcomings in that respect, and it had not abandoned the search for alternative sites.

His Lordship was not persuaded that the council had not taken into account all the relevant circumstances, including the need to balance its responsibilities to gipsies against its duties to highway users, its own non-harassment policy, the changed situation at Baichfield Lane and the hardship that would be caused to the gipsies.

It did not make any difference that Mr Ruxworthy had not been shown to have caused the damage and other matters. If a particular trespasser always had to be identified to sum up the position of the local authority would be impossible.

The decision to evict was not unlawful. As to other relief sought, his Lordship would grant a declaration that Mr Ruxworthy was a gipsy within the meaning of section 16 of the 1968 Act.

Although that was conceded at a late stage, in the light of *Greenwich London Borough Council v Powell* (The Times December 12, 1988), it was right to grant a declaration.

There would also be a declaration that the council was in breach of its section 6 duty.

Solicitors: Parry Maclean, Bristol; Mr Raymond J. Wager, Bristol.

Liversidge v London Residential Body

Before Mr Justice Wood, Mr T. H. Jenkins and Mr K. Young
[Judgment December 12]

When computing the period of continuous service for redundancy payments purposes, an employee's period of service with a registered water authority, set up by the Water Act 1973, could be aggregated with the period of low authority service which preceded or followed it.

Thus an employee who had worked for the Greater London Council from February 1970 until he was compulsorily transferred to the Thames Water Authority in April 1974 and who returned to the GLC in May 1975 could not include his period of employment prior to May 1975 for the purposes of a redundancy payment claim when he was made redundant in March 1986.

The words "relevant local government service" (Local Government) (Modification) Order (SI 1983 No 1072) included employment with the Thames Water Authority.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal dismissed an appeal by Mr Sidney Liversidge from a decision of a London industrial tribunal in June 1987 that he was entitled to a redundancy payment from the London Residential Body based on only his period of employment from May 1975.

He had appealed on the ground, *inter alia*, that the industrial tribunal had erred in law in holding that relevant local government service did not extend to service with a water authority.

Mr R. E. Maddison, legal officer, UK Association of Professional Engineers, for Mr

Liversidge; Mr Christopher Jenkins for the London Residential Body.

MR JUSTICE WOOD said that the employee was an engineer in the water services department of the GLC which was concerned with sewage disposal. Under the Water Act 1973 the sewage disposal functions of the GLC were transferred to the Thames Water Authority and the employee was compulsorily transferred to that authority.

The employment was not to his liking and in May 1975 he was transferred to the GLC. In April 1986 the London Residential Body took over the GLC's duties and obligations and the employee was made redundant.

The issue was the length of his service upon which the calculation of redundancy pay was to be made and the answer depended on whether the provisions of the 1983 Order applied to the employee's service prior to May 1975.

The 1983 Order was passed against a background of negotiations and discussions between each side of local government and the water industry itself and redundancy payments were under constant review.

The Order was amended in 1985 (SI 1985 No 1872) so that there had been an opportunity for both sides of industry to rectify any error or omission arising from the terms of the original order.

The overall scheme of the order was to provide that the "relevant service" of a person employed "immediately before" by an employer of a particular description (that is, within Schedule 1) should be able to aggregate with the service of another employer of a particular description (that is, within Schedule 2) for the purposes of the provisions of the Employment

Transition Act 1978, as modified by the 1983 Order.

The question of construction of regulations and statutes was often one of interpretation. The first important point was the fact that throughout the order there was reference to local government and not to public authorities.

Further, in the early paragraphs of the appendix to Schedule 2 (which listed employers with which employment might constitute relevant local government service) and in Schedule 1 (employment to which the order applied) the reference was clearly to local government bodies. The words "authorities" and "bodies" were virtually synonymous.

The two paragraphs relied on (paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 or paragraph 5 of the appendix to Schedule 2) were found to be in the Schedule and the appendix and after the identification of local government bodies. They were intended to sweep up those types of bodies appearing above them on the list and each was therefore a reference to local government bodies.

Finally, many of the employees identified in the Schedule and appendix would be properly defined as public authorities. If so many specific employees had been included it seemed incredible that where continuity of employment was being constantly reviewed by both sides of the water industry the water authorities would have been forgotten.

Accordingly the Thames Water Authority did not fall within the 1983 Order as amended and the industrial tribunal's decision was upheld. The appeal was dismissed and leave to appeal granted.

Solicitors: Mr R. A. Latham.

eliminated from its balance sheet.

